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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7785th meeting

Saturday, 8 October 2016, 2.30 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Ayrault
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

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The meeting was called to order at 2.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them documents S/2016/846 and S/2016/847, which contain the texts of two draft resolutions, respectively.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Ayrault (France) (*spoke in French*): Faced with the unbearable horror of Aleppo's martyrdom, the Security Council must again assume the responsibility entrusted to it by the international community to guarantee peace, ensure security and protect civilians.

We heard yesterday from Special Envoy of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura. His description resounded like a warning cry. If this situation continues, by the end of the year we will bear witness to the destruction of Aleppo. The message Staffan de Mistura addressed to the Security Council is unambiguous. If we do not act, the city will soon be no more than a field of ruins and will go down in history as a place whose inhabitants were abandoned to their executioners.

Fifteen days ago in this Chamber, on behalf of France I called for an immediate ceasefire (see S/PV.7774). Since then, following a stillborn agreement, the Syrian regime has confirmed its objective with breathtaking brutality — and it has nothing to do with the fight against terrorism. Its objective is the capitulation of Aleppo. Daraya, Hama, Aleppo — with each, the tactics of the Syrian regime have been the same: indiscriminate bombing and the methodical destruction of civilian infrastructure to inflict maximum suffering on the population. Most recently, this has included eliminating the supply of drinking water in Aleppo and the systematic targeting of hospitals and health personnel. Each time, those who back Damascus provide decisive support for a strategy that seeks exclusively to secure the surrender of fighters and the exodus of civilians through operations that involve a cycle of potentially devastating ethnic cleansing.

How can we collectively tolerate this? The Secretary-General has spoken of war crimes. We all recall Guernica, Srebrenica and Grozny. What is happening before our eyes in Aleppo is the sinister repetition of those tragedies. If it does not pull itself together, the international community will share the responsibility for these events.

The regime and its supporters claim to act on behalf of the fight against terrorism. I denounce that fraudulent claim with great force. Bashar Al-Assad does not fight terrorism; he feeds it. Since the beginning of the conflict, he has targeted the moderate opposition above all because it embodies the only hope for the eventual restoration of a united and peaceful Syria. He has organized a lethal understanding between himself and Da'esh and Al-Qaida, groups with which he has shared goals and which he deliberately spares.

France has paid the price of terrorism. It cannot allow this critical fight, which should bring us all together, to be derailed by punitive actions that ultimately only strengthen those it claims to wish to eliminate. Destroying hospitals, starving civilians, massacring women and children, and besieging cities as in the Middle Ages merely fuels radicalization and terrorism. We must therefore halt this vicious cycle on an urgent basis. Today, faced with this horror, the Security Council must make a simple and obvious decision. It must demand immediate action to save Aleppo, an end to all bombing by the regime and its allies, and the unhindered and unconditional delivery of humanitarian assistance to a population that desperately requires it. That is what the situation in Aleppo calls for.

And that is what France, alongside most members of the Council, has promoted tirelessly. A week ago, alongside Spain, we submitted a simple draft resolution in response to this emergency. What does it say? It reaffirms the obvious unacceptability of the

indiscriminate repression by the Syrian regime of its own people. It recalls all the decisions taken by our Council since the onset of the crisis. It sets out the conditions for a just and lasting peace — a political solution whose outline we defined long ago. Finally, it expresses a desire for unity around the goal that brings us together — the fight against terrorism.

The draft resolution also makes clear and precise demands, including an immediate halt to the bombing and military flights over Aleppo; humanitarian access; respect for the truce, guaranteed by an effective verification mechanism whose modalities are open; the withdrawal of all forms of support or collaboration with terrorist groups designated by the Security Council; and the resumption of the political process.

Some would impose conditions on the halt to the bombing, including the precise identification of the whereabouts of terrorist groups and their separation. That is a sham because it is unachievable so long as the bombing continues. That much is obvious. Moreover, smashing a city with bombs and massacring civilians is tantamount to doing the terrorists' work for them, not fighting them. I reiterate that the genuine emergency is an end to the bombing, which is the only valid precondition because it determines everything else.

We patiently negotiated the draft resolution in good faith and with the desire to unite the international community around a single goal. The legitimate concerns raised by some have been taken into account, and it is with an open heart and extended hand that I have personally striven in recent days and hours to create the conditions for consensus, in all sincerity and without ulterior motives, driven by the sole desire to promote the return of peace in Syria, to end the martyrdom of a people and to promote a solution to the plight of millions of refugees and displaced persons. I feel that the broad majority of Council members understand and approve of this approach.

The adoption of the draft resolution could restore to the inhabitants of Aleppo, the Syrian people and the rest of us a glimmer of hope for an end to the spiral of violence and for a new political dynamic based on the immediate resumption of negotiations for a transition, the outlines of which were unanimously defined by the Security Council a little less than a year ago.

If instead our draft is rejected, despite enjoying broad support, what will we have left? There will be more death, more refugees, and more displaced. But we must neither reject it nor give up. Each of us will have to imagine the consequences and take the serious and necessary decisions to ensure that the perpetrators of war crimes do not go unpunished, that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons are identified and punished, and that those who abet an exhausted regime shoulder the consequences. All those who refuse to give up must come together and act.

In 2011, a people rose up peacefully against oppression. For five years, despite savage repression, that people has not given up. Let us not leave that sorely tested and suffering people to choose between an inhumane executioner or the abject terrorism of Da'esh and the Al-Nusra Front. I call on every member of the Council to assume its responsibilities to save the population of Aleppo, come together for peace and send the Syrian regime the message it should have heard long ago.

What is at stake today is, first of all, the fate of Aleppo and its population, but it is also above all the hope of finally ending a conflict of whose catastrophic costs we must all pay the price. Faced with such dire stakes, to hinder the adoption of the draft resolution before us today would be to allow Bashar Al-Assad to keep on killing. It would above all be offering a senseless gift to the terrorists. My dearest wish is that the Council does not offer such a gift.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Along with France, Spain has supported this draft resolution (S/2016/846) on Aleppo in order to try to respond to a desperate situation. During more than five years of a heart-breaking conflict in Syria, we have seen indiscriminate attacks against civilians. We have seen both parties destroy hospitals, schools and even humanitarian convoys. We have seen with alarm the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian army. In spite of that, we are here today because the worst phase of the war in Syria could still lie ahead. The offensive by President Al-Assad against eastern Aleppo is a tragedy against which the international community cannot turn its back.

As the French Minister for Foreign Affairs has correctly said, this draft resolution seeks to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe. We therefore demand an immediate halt to aerial attacks, which are terrorizing the 275,000 civilians trapped in the eastern part of the city. The main goal of the draft resolution is to save from disaster an ancient city at risk of being levelled

to the ground by the brutality of a fratricidal war. Spain's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. José Manuel García Margallo, clearly expressed our view here in the Security Council when the increase in clashes began in late September (see S/PV.7774). He identified three essential steps on which we must focus our efforts.

The first was to ensure that a ceasefire takes effect; the second was to ensure humanitarian access; and the third was to create the necessary conditions to relaunch United Nations mediation. The draft resolution in effect calls for the immediate observance of a ceasefire throughout the entire country. We also aim to improve the monitoring mechanism, which has not worked as desired in recent months. We call on the Security Council — for the first time since the war in Syria began — to send a clear message to the parties to isolate the terrorist groups in Syria, who are posing a threat to the entire international community.

Secondly, we aim to ensure once and for all that humanitarian access is in the hands of the professionals of the United Nations and of the Red Crescent. It is intolerable that the Syrian Government continues to block assistance to its own population, using fictitious bureaucratic hurdles and deliberate tactics, such as removing medical materials, which amount to war crimes. The draft resolution therefore establishes that it ought to be the United Nations that determines the number of beneficiaries and the needs of almost 900,000 civilians in Syria. We also call for an investigation into the attack on the United Nations-Red Crescent convoy at Urum Al-Kubra on 19 September. We will not rest until we have done everything possible to ensure that those responsible are held accountable before justice. We hope that, wherever they may, they will listen clearly to this message today on the part of all members of the Security Council.

Lastly, the draft resolution calls for a return to the path of dialogue as soon as possible, while also expressing our full support for the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General.

France and Spain have done everything within their power to garner the support of the 15 members of the Security Council. This has been a sincere effort to incorporate the various points of view, while always respecting the main purpose of the draft resolution — nothing less than avoiding catastrophe in Aleppo and slowing the escalation of violence. We note that we are near to achieving consensus. We still hope that the countries seated around this table will allow the adoption of this draft resolution. We still have time to make the right decision.

Lastly, Spain would like to express its gratitude to the many States Members of the United Nations that are sponsoring this draft resolution. We interpret that support as a message that the Security Council should fulfil the responsibility entrusted to it by the Charter. From the seat we occupy here as a non-permanent member of this organ, we will work tirelessly to ensure that is the case.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

Today we are participants in one of the strangest scenarios in the history of the Security Council. We are about to vote on two draft resolutions (S/2016/846 and S/2016/847), and we are all perfectly aware that neither of them will be adopted. Considering that the crisis in Syria is going through an agonizing stage that demands the greatest possible political cooperation on the part of the international community, such a waste of time is unacceptable.

We all know the background to the Syrian crisis. After destroying Libya and considering that a great success, the troika of the three Western permanent members of the Security Council turned on Syria. And this time, most unfortunately, Paris — which in 2003 joined with Moscow and other clear-thinking capitals in an effort to deter the United States and United Kingdom from an opportunistic invasion of Iraq — has become one of the loudest promoters of an ill-conceived policy of regime change in Damascus.

It grieves us to point out that in all the years of the Syrian crisis, the French delegation in the Security Council has never once made any constructive proposals, with its rare initiatives clearly calculated for propaganda effect and doomed to failure. And that is what happened this time. Our French colleagues approached us about a week ago, informing us that they wanted us to support a draft resolution on Syria, and emphasizing that Paris did not want a Russian veto. On 6 October, those assurances about the desire to avoid a Russian veto were confirmed at a higher level. But 24 hours later, after only one round of serious consultations, a draft resolution, doomed to receive the Russian veto that we had repeatedly and justifiably discussed, was put in blue and submitted for a vote.

We should point out that Spain — which was specifically invited to be a member of the International Syria Support Group by Russia — has continually reminded us of its co-authorship of the draft resolution. The Spanish diplomatic efforts are disappointing. In particular, the French-Spanish draft resolution features a ban on all military flights over Aleppo, and not only over the eastern part of the city but also the west, which has been continually under fire from fighters from the eastern side. In September alone, according to United Nations data, more than 80 civilians were killed and 170 wounded. Moreover, the concept of banning all military flights has not been thought through at all. To the question of whether that also meant a ban on the reconnaissance drones tracking fighters' movements, there was no answer. To the question of why it also applies to the western part of the city, which the Government controls, the anwer was that it was more convenient. Is that what you call a serious discussion?

Another main point is that there has never been an instance in the entire history of the Security Council when a permanent member was allowed to adopt a resolution that directly or indirectly predetermined its course of action without prior discussion of the matter. I do not think we will see any such cases in future — unless France, having renounced the right of veto, is then controlled by a majority of Security Council members. Whatever the restrictions, they can be considered only in the context of compliance with the ceasefire, which terrorists and other illegal armed groups are routinely violating. Another basic flaw in the French-Spanish draft resolution is that instead of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) monitoring mechanism provided for in resolution 2268 (2016), it proposes a duplicative plan pulled out of thin air. We regard this as an attempt to do away with the existing collaborative architecture.

In the circumstances, yesterday afternoon we took the unusual step of drafting a resolution intended to demonstrate that a reasonable course of collective action does exist whereby we can build on all the positive things that we previously worked out so painstakingly. Our draft includes a provision relating to the still-relevant parameters of the Russian-American agreement of 9 September, emphasizing the importance of ensuring immediate and unhindered humanitarian access, specifically via weekly 48-hour humanitarian pauses. The text of the document is annexed to the draft resolution.

The draft resolution includes a provision on the importance of ensuring that the ceasefire is adhered to by every side in Aleppo and affirms the existing monitoring arrangement involving the ISSG ceasefire task force. It establishes the fundamental priority of distinguishing the moderate opposition from Jabhat Al-Nusra and urges ISSG members to require all parties to cease conducting joint combat operations with terrorists and to separate from them and officially adhere to the cessation of hostilities. It points out that in order to make progress with humanitarian efforts, the fighters should stop blocking traffic on the Castello road, in accordance with the 9 September agreement.

The draft resolution welcomes Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura's initiative of 6 October aimed at normalizing the situation in Aleppo. It requests that the Secretary-General submit a detailed plan for its implementation for the Security Council's approval. Incidentally, in another of its major shortcomings, the French-Spanish draft resolution completely ignores Mr. de Mistura's initiative. Our draft resolution emphasizes how crucial it is to achieve full, unconditional compliance with resolution 2254 (2015) on every front — political, humanitarian and counter-terrorism. We continue to believe that we should work to make progress in all those directions simultaneously, with no attempts at mutual coordination or preconditions. The inter-Syrian political process, which the radical opposition, with the direct connivance of its foreign sponsors, has been blocking since May, must be relaunched as soon as possible.

We realize that our draft resolution will not get enough votes today. Some will be guided by anti-Russian sentiments, others by false notions of prestige, and some will simply not have the courage. Russia will nonetheless continue to work to achieve a settlement in Syria with all interested international and regional stakeholders. The amount of fighting overall in eastern Aleppo has been falling. Yesterday, for example, almost no combat missions were flown. We hope that trend will continue.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I shall first put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2016/846, submitted by Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia,

Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

Against:

Russian Federation and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Abstaining:

Angola and China

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 11 votes in favour, 2 votes against and 2 abstentions. The draft resolution has not been adopted, owing to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council.

I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make a statement after the voting.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I normally begin my statements in the Council with the words "Thank you, Mr. President". I cannot do that today, because today we have seen the fifth veto of a vote on Syria in five years from you, Mr. President — a veto that has once again stopped the Council from creating the unity needed to give the people of Syria any hope of respite from their suffering; a veto that has once again denigrated the credibility of the Security Council and respect for it in the eyes of the world; a veto that is a cynical abuse of the privileges and responsibilities of permanent membership. I simply cannot thank you for it. Nor can the thousands on thousands of innocent men, women and children trapped in Aleppo. Tonight they will endure another night of fear and pain, and another night of wondering whether they will live to see the morning. One hundred thousand of them are children.

The current tactics being used in Aleppo under the alibi of countering terrorism are turning a humanitarian crisis into a catastrophe, and your veto today, Mr. President, has only confirmed what we have known for a long time. Russia's actions in recent weeks have exposed just how hollow its commitment to the political process is. Today we have seen that commitment for what it really is — a sham. Instead of investing energy in peace and diplomacy, Russia has supported, facilitated and cooperated with the Syrian regime in order to retake and destroy areas standing against Al-Assad, literally killing off those who want a moderate, peaceful and pluralistic future, free from both the barbarism of Al-Assad and the horrors inflicted by Da'esh and other terrorists in Syria. And it is Syrian civilians who continue to bear the brunt of that cruelty and Russia's complicity. Civilians, medics, White Helmets are under direct attack from barrel bombs, cluster munitions and incendiary weapons, and that is even before we mention the continued barbaric use of chemical weapons by the regime.

I echo the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who described the destruction of Aleppo as the absolute contempt for the human spirit and for the dignity of the human being. The Security Council cannot stand by while such misery is meted out on the people of Aleppo, and yet, thanks to you, Mr. President, that is exactly what we are doing.

This text that you vetoed, Sir, was not unreasonable. It called for sensible, overdue steps that would have saved lives, starting with the complete end of the bombardment of Aleppo. There can be no military justification for aerial attacks that indiscriminately hit civilians and their homes and their hospitals. The text called for full and unhindered humanitarian access. It is despicable that the regime continues to refuse access to besieged and hard-to-reach areas. It is despicable that the violence is so extreme that the safety even of humanitarian convoys cannot be assured, as seen through the strike on a United Nations aid convoy last month, for which the evidence is clear that Russia was responsible.

Further, this text called for the full implementation of resolution 2268 (2016) and the resumption of the cessation of hostilities. We see every day in Aleppo that there simply can be no military victory in this conflict. There can only be losers. We also see every day that obligation after obligation, set by resolution after resolution of the Security Council, are being flouted. We need Council unity to end this war, and that unity will only come when Russia changes its policy and stops the aerial bombardment.

This has been a strong week for Council unity, and yet we have ended on sadly familiar ground. We, the whole Council, stood with you, Mr. President, on Wednesday, as you announced the next Secretary-General. Thanks to your actions today, Sir, António Guterres' job will be even harder. And worse still, thanks to your actions today, Syrians will continue to lose their lives in Aleppo and beyond to Russian and Syrian bombing. Please stop now.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): I wish first to acknowledge the presence of His Excellency Mr. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, and thank him for introducing the draft resolution contained in document S/2016/846, co-authored by France and Spain. We also note the draft resolution contained in document S/2016/847, submitted by the Russian Federation, on which the Council will take action later.

Malaysia has repeatedly called for the Security Council to act more decisively on Syria. We view this latest effort by France and Spain as an attempt to assert the Council's authority and discharge its responsibility to effectively address the deteriorating situation in Syria. We believe that the main objective of the draft resolution contained in document S/2016/846 was to prevent further escalation of violence and hostilities, including by calling for a halt to aerial bombardment, is key to reducing the death and destruction that have disproportionately affected thousands of Syrian civilians, particularly women and children, for far too long.

Cessation of aerial bombardment would have been a very welcome and necessary step in elevating the despicable suffering of those civilians in eastern Aleppo who have borne the brunt of such bombardment in recent weeks. Of utmost importance to my delegation is the understanding that, had this draft resolution been adopted, all parties to the conflict with the capacity to carry out air strikes would have to heed the provisions of paragraph 3 of the Franco-Spanish text. Given its clarity of purpose and the compelling reasons behind it, my delegation voted in favour of the Franco-Spanish draft. We are gravely disappointed that the draft resolution was voted down. It is shameful and a betrayal of all the hopes pinned upon the Security Council to alleviate the dreadful suffering caused by a brutal conflict.

Briefly, on the draft resolution contained in document S/2016/847, there is no question that the draft has some merit and contains elements that also speak to alleviating the humanitarian situation, on restarting the political process in Syria and on combating terrorism. That notwithstanding, Malaysia and other members of the Council are not privy to the 9 September bilateral agreement between Russia and the United States. Since the United States has publicly repudiated the agreement on account of lack of implementation, we do not believe that the Council is in a position to endorse such an agreement. We are therefore not in a position to support this draft.

We are fearful of the consequences of the Council's actions, particular on the message of Council disunity that we have displayed today. The Security Council cannot afford to continue in this state of paralysis, with total disregard for the abysmal situations faced by innocent civilians in Syria. With such deep disunity, how much hope and prayers can those besieged Syrians in such appalling situations pin on us?

In our view, these initiatives today do not represent the Council's best efforts. The responsibility of addressing the conflict in Syria remains squarely on our shoulders. In this regard, a number of us could perhaps coalesce around a middle ground with the hope of finding a way out of the current stalemate and move closer to a common understanding on ending hostilities and conflict. We will certainly work to this end alongside interested Council members and other partners. We must never give up hope. We must not let eastern Aleppo end tragically.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): Yesterday we met in the consultations room and listened to United Nations Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura describe the daily deadly indiscriminate bombings raining down on eastern Aleppo. We heard Special Envoy de Mistura implore the Security Council to take urgent action to avert a large-scale massacre, noting that failure on our part would be a tragedy and a stain on the Security Council that lingers like others in recent history.

The draft resolution contained in document S/2016/846, vetoed by Russia today, had a simple demand and one goal: stop the bombing in Aleppo City. Over the last two weeks, Russia and the Al-Assad regime have launched a terrifying military offensive in eastern Aleppo that has laid waste to an area of the city with 275,000 civilians trapped inside of it. Air strikes from this Russian and Syrian regime offensive

have systematically eliminated whatever infrastructure was left to support the people of eastern Aleppo. Hospitals have been bombed. Pumps for drinking water have been bombed. Ambulances and fire trucks for first responders have been bombed. Families have been trapped under the rubble. Hundreds of civilians are dead, and hundreds of thousands of civilians are literally at risk of starving to death if nothing changes.

The Secretary-General has described Aleppo as worse than a slaughterhouse. The United Nations Special Envoy has warned the city will be completely destroyed by the end of the year. And we know the cause — the air strikes conducted by Russia and the Al-Assad regime are the cause. Russia and Al-Assad want to seize eastern Aleppo to further bolster the regime in Damascus. Russia could not let this draft resolution stand in their way, so they vetoed it. Russia dropped its veto here in the Security Council to strengthen Bashar Al-Assad at the expense of 275,000 Syrians. We have heard so many warnings in this Chamber, so many words of anguish offered, so many descriptions of the barbarism that is unfolding. Simply put, today was time for the Council to act, to learn the lessons of the recent past. We failed to do that because one of us — perversely, the President of the Security Council — is intent on allowing the killing to continue and, indeed, participating in carrying it out. It is grotesque.

Russia, as always, will offer a different narrative. Russia has said that it is fighting terrorism. They will probably somehow blame the United States of America for the suffering in Aleppo; they will suggest that we are the ones not serious about the fight against terrorism; they will invoke past conflicts in distant lands; and they will lie. In short, they will do anything and everything to deny and deflect from the truth.

The truth is that Russia is using counter-terrorism as an excuse to help the Al-Assad regime re-take control of Aleppo by brutal force, snuff out whatever opposition groups dare to resist the Al-Assad regime's brutality, and cow civilians who yearn for a different government into submission. As Secretary of State John Kerry has said,

> "this is a targeted strategy to terrorize civilians and kill anybody and everybody who is in the way of their military objectives".

There is no other plausible explanation. Why else would the first targets in the Syrian/Russian offensive be hospitals and the bases for first responders, which should have been protected? Why else would each hospital in eastern Aleppo have been struck not once, but at least twice? Why else would a convoy of life-saving humanitarian aid bound for Aleppo be destroyed?

One does not have to be an international legal scholar to know that there is a term that may well describe these actions: war crimes, and they must be investigated. Russia cannot use the presence of what the United Nations estimates to be a couple hundred members of Al-Nusra to justify an indiscriminate aerial bombing campaign devastating an entire population of hundreds of thousands of civilians currently trapped by Russia and the regime.

Russia has the privilege of serving as a permanent member of the Security Council, with a responsibility to maintain international peace and security. But through the campaign it describes as counter-terrorism, Russia has become one of the chief purveyors of terror in Aleppo, using tactics more commonly associated with thugs than Governments. Russia and the Al-Assad regime think the world will look the other way if they recite the word "counter-terrorism". That is wrong, and each and every one of us must make that clear to Russia.

There are terrorists in Syria — a lot of them. The United States does not need anyone to explain why terrorists are serious, deadly and dangerous. That there are terrorists in Syria is the reason the United States leads a 67-member coalition in the region to fight them. It is why the United States remains unambiguous in our call for opposition groups to separate themselves from Al-Nusra. It is why this week the United States conducted an air strike that targeted a senior Al-Nusra leader in Idlib, Syria.

The United States will be relentless in our fight against terrorism. We spent months looking for a way to work with Russia on a campaign that would have effectively targeted Al-Nusra. We agreed on a way forward that would have allowed us to focus on terrorist targets. In return, we asked that Russia show a good faith commitment by upholding a cessation of hostilities and allowing for humanitarian aid. When presented with this opportunity to cooperate on counter-terrorism, Russia decided to walk away. Russia decided to ignore the Council's repeated calls to implement the cessation of hostilities. Russia decided that it would support the Al-Assad regime's military campaign to "re-take every inch of Syria", to use Al-Assad's own words.

Some here today will criticize this draft resolution for lacking balance, but there is no balance in the bombardment of eastern Aleppo. It is simple. Russia and the Al-Assad regime launched the deadliest campaign of aerial bombardment since 2011. Russia and the Al-Assad regime are using incendiary weapons and bunker-buster bombs, which are magnifying human suffering, hitting even doctors trying to treat patients in basement emergency rooms because nowhere else was safe. Russia and the Syrian regime are causing this bloody chaos. So we must demand that the ones responsible for this air campaign stop. This is not how you defeat terrorists; it is how you create them.

In this conflict, violence begets violence. Our effort today was to stop bombardments over Aleppo, nothing more. It is a deadly shame that we were unable to do so. The United States remains committed to finding ways to de-escalate this violence, put a ceasefire in place and start a genuine political process. But for that to happen, there must be an end to the horrific suffering of the people of eastern Aleppo, caused by the current President of the Security Council's and Syrian aircraft. It is time for Russia to stop starving and killing Aleppo's children.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): The situation in Aleppo is devastating, as Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura made very clear to us yesterday. He warned us that we are facing a situation not dissimilar to those in Rwanda and Srebrenica, atrocities the Council signally failed to prevent. We must learn our lessons; we must stop the destruction of the entire city of eastern Aleppo.

Terrorism is a scourge to the world, but it is not acceptable that Russia and Syria use counter-terrorism as a pretext for a large-scale bombing campaign for which civilians are paying the greatest price. Whatever the sins of the hundreds or thousand plus terrorists in eastern Aleppo, that cannot justify the prolonged bombardment of 275,000 civilians.

We had hoped that the Council would have been able to come together on a text that all parties could accept and that could stand a chance of contributing to practical and constructive action on the ground. The failure of today's draft resolution, contained in document S/2016/846, contributes to the polarized dynamic on Syria among the major Powers and undermines the credibility of the Security Council.

Given the recent breakdown of the cessation of hostilities and the curtailing of diplomatic efforts by the United States and Russia, it is vital to use all multilateral channels, particularly the Council, to move the parties away from the killing and back towards the negotiating table and, in the meantime, to spare the Syrian people and allow them the humanitarian assistance they so desperately need.

The Council has a special responsibility. We will continue to talk with other Council members to explore what action might be possible in the coming days.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): We know that New Zealand attempted to develop a draft resolution that would have been a happy medium between the two approaches before us today, and we regret that some influential members of the Council did not allow that draft to go forward.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): Ukraine co-sponsored and voted in favour of the draft resolution contained in document S/2016/846. We commend the hard work carried out by the French and Spanish delegations in drafting and negotiating it.

We are extremely dismayed, but not surprised, by the fact that all these efforts were, in the end, derailed by the veto power of Russia. This is the fifth veto exercised by Russia with respect to draft resolutions concerning Syria over the past years. Had the draft resolution seen the light and been adopted, it would have been a real meaningful step by the Council towards exercising preventive diplomacy. It would have helped to prevent what is about to become one of the gravest humanitarian tragedies of our times. History will hold accountable those who did not let the Council discharge its duties. Bearing in mind the clear humanitarian character of the draft resolution aimed at stopping the razing of eastern Aleppo by the end of the year, we acted fully in line with the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, which Ukraine joined last year.

We are extremely disappointed that the political statement on the suspension of the veto in the case of mass atrocities, an initiative designed to curb the use of veto by the permanent members of the Council, has yet to gain traction. Here again, the Russian Federation is more interested in safeguarding its privileges than in fulfilling its responsibilities before the international community. For Ukraine, that is nothing new; we have seen Russia exercise its veto quite recently, in March 2014 and July 2015. In those cases, the Council's action would have saved thousands of human lives and sent

a powerful messages to perpetrators of heinous acts against civilians, and their crimes would not have gone unpunished.

What we see today has a meaning — Russia's policies remain unchanged. If the current dynamics of the Syrian conflict continue and the logic of war prevails over the voices of peace, we, as the international community, face a real risk of a protracted deadly conflict lasting many more years. The repercussions for such a scenario are a Pandora's box that is easy to open but nearly impossible to close — more refugees flowing to Europe and other places, more destabilization in neighbouring countries, a rising death toll and a deepening humanitarian crisis. If Russia is not waging hybrid warfare to reassert itself in the world at any price, then black is white and white is black.

Those who oppose peace and prolong war risk setting the wider region ablaze in a fire of sectarian war and radicalization, giving more space for the extremist to exploit. Finally, I want to echo the words of Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura, that we do not want to live through another Srebrenica or Rwanda. To that, I would add that we also do not want to live through another Grozny.

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The situation in Syria is intolerable. Against the backdrop of exploding bombs, meeting after meeting, negotiation after negotiation, resolution after resolution, human beings are annihilated. Homes, markets, schools, health facilities are all reduced to rubble, in violation of all the rules of international humanitarian law. I echo the sentiments of my President, Mr. Macky Sall, who expressed them here on 21 September under the presidency of New Zealand (see S/PV.7774). By deciding to vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted by France and Spain, Senegal echoed the heartfelt appeal of the Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for the Council to act urgently to avoid eastern Aleppo from becoming an unprecedented tragedy.

Senegal had hoped that the time had come for the Council, as guarantor of international peace and security, to shoulder its responsibilities to reestablish a ceasefire, not only in eastern Aleppo, but also across Syria. Unfortunately the draft resolution proposed by France and Spain was unsuccessful. Mr. De Mistura had warned us about the risk of Aleppo being completely destroyed in two months with thousands dead and wounded if air strikes were to be deployed.

My delegation takes this opportunity to once again urge the International Syria Support Group, in particular its two co-chairs, to do whatever it takes to reach an effective and lasting truce across Syria in order to allow unfettered and unconditional humanitarian assistance and the resumption of a credible process, under the aegis of the United Nations, on the basis of the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/523, annex) and resolution 2254 (2015).

If we do not rally around the objectives of peace and stability in Syria, we will run the risk of strengthening terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, Jabhat Fath al-Sham and the former Jabhat al-Nusrah, who are our common enemies that must be fought in the framework of a shared comprehensive strategy.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): Japan supported the French and Spanish proposal, because among other things, it demands that all parties immediately end all aerial bombardments of Aleppo. Those bombardments are ruthlessly destroying hospitals and killing civilians. The situation is devastating. It is deeply regrettable that the Security Council has failed, thus far, to overcome its differences. All military activities in eastern Aleppo must be halted immediately, particularly the indiscriminate attacks which are violating international humanitarian law.

Today's failure to adopt a draft resolution that would have improved the humanitarian situation in Aleppo is yet another unfortunate example of the Security Council not being able to take effective measures on a matter of great urgency. That should not be an excuse for inaction in the crisis in Aleppo. There are pressing humanitarian needs on the ground. We must undertake measures to enable immediate medical evacuation as well as the movement of humanitarian supplies from western Aleppo. The Council has a responsibility to take concrete actions to bring about actual changes on the ground. The Syrian people have already suffered far too long.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): With the firm commitment to fully respecting international humanitarian law, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela condemns indiscriminate attacks against the civilian population and humanitarian personnel carried out by any party. It also condemns air strikes carried out against hospitals and health facilities, just

as we have denounced them in the Gaza strip, in the occupied territories of the State of Palestine, in Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Afghanistan and Syria. Nevertheless, our country voted against the draft resolution on the situation in eastern Aleppo because the it does not adequately address the humanitarian problem that is severely impacting the civilian population in that province, due to the terrorist barbarism of Jabhat al-Nusrah and its related groups, and the terrible logic of war in the country.

We are concerned that although the humanitarian situation calls for concrete responses based on the principles of impartiality, objectivity and non-politicization, in this case the noble humanitarian aim has been distorted in favour of the political interests of some of the members of the Security Council to the detriment of the Syrian people. Specifically, the humanitarian tragedy of the people in eastern Aleppo is being used in an attempt to blame Syria and Russia for exacerbating the humanitarian situation in the zone, where in truth those directly responsible for that tragedy are the terrorist groups with foreign backing that have been committing heinous crimes against the people of Syria for five years now, in their desire and purpose of overthrowing a legitimate Government.

We cannot ignore the fact that there are other interested parties to the conflict within the Security Council. Therefore, in that regard, we members of the Council have a shared but differentiated responsibility. Those players have been direct participants in the armed conflict since its inception, providing weapons to violent non-State actors who then became terrorist groups that are no longer under their control. They now claim not to understand the consequences of their own actions and employ dramatic rhetoric while continuing to fuel a war, not only in Syri, but throughout the Middle East.

We believe that, had there been genuine interest in producing a consensus document, the Council would have been in possession of a draft resolution that reflected its unity. Regrettably, the political agendas of some of the members of the Council took precedence, which prevented a positive outcome — to the detriment of the people in Aleppo. The obstinate insistence on pushing this draft resolution (S/2016/846) in the Council while knowing that it was not viable has deepened divisions within this collegial organ. We now run the risk of undermining the progress that has been made, in particular by the co-Chairs of the International Syria Support Group — the Russian Federation and the United States — as well as the efforts of Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura.

The fight against terrorism being conducted jointly by the Governments of Syria and Russia cannot be viewed as an excuse for destroying the Syrian population in Aleppo, as some are attempting to encourage without good basis. A genuine threat exists in that region and is reflected by the thousands of fighters of the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist groups that are holding hostage the thousands of civilians living there and using them as human shields — all in breach of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We need only recall that the Government of Syria opened up humanitarian corridors to evacuate the city of Aleppo, while the terrorist groups executed those who attempted to leave the city.

Given the fight against terrorism is a goal shared by the international community, as stated in various Security Council resolutions, we do not understand how the so-called moderate opposition has not disassociated itself once and for all from the Al-Nusra Front. If its intentions for peace and stability in Syria are indeed sincere, the moderate opposition should join in the efforts to eliminate the scourge of terrorism and take part fully in the peace talks without any preconditions. What is urgent is to stop outside support to armed groups — which evolve into terrorist groups — and to implement the cessation of hostilities agreed upon on 9 September.

In addition, it is paradoxical that today's draft resolution demands that Syria curtail its legitimate right to exercise full sovereignty over its territory, in particular its airspace by ceasing all military flights over Aleppo. That demand stands in contrast to the flexibility — or the failure — of the Council in other conflicts, such as in the Gaza Strip, Fallujah, Baghdad, Yemen or Afghanistan. We insist that issues brought before the Council should not be addressed with double standards. We believe that Syria's full exercise of its sovereignty, by way of controlling its territory, is a guarantee for an effective fight against the scourge of terrorism in that country. We wonder how Syria could be asked to limit its sovereignty when sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence are all enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as being key to international peace and security.

The Council does not have the right to violate the sovereignty of Member States, and it cannot decide whether or not a Government is legitimate. That is solely up to peoples. We cannot allow the disastrous military acts of aggression that occurred in Iraq, Libya and other places to reoccur. Those events inflicted a great deal of suffering on the people of those countries by creating fertile ground for Al-Qaida to expand and Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant to emerge, following the dismantling of their institutional and political structures.

In conclusion, we reject the fact that the human tragedy being experienced the Syrian people is being manipulated by a war imposed from abroad and financed and sustained by foreign players and fighters. In spite of the media pressure and manipulation, in order to address the issue without double standards, uphold the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and work towards a political, negotiated solution to such a terrible conflict, we will resolutely continue working towards peace.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/847, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:
China, Egypt, Russian Federation, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Against:
France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:
Angola, Uruguay

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 4 votes in favour, 9 against and 2 abstentions. The draft resolution has not been adopted having failed to obtain the required number of votes.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I find myself at a loss for words to express our deep sorrow at the scene we are witnessing today — the military escalation that compelled the Security Council to convene before the entire world in order to convey a message of failure to the Syrian people. Regrettably, the Council, which was created in the previous century to peaceably settle disputes, is gradually becoming a mere media platform. Instead of holding serious political consultations, in open and closed meetings, to stop the Syrian bloodletting, consultations have amounted to no more than a repetition of traditional positions and dialogue that falls on deaf ears.

We used to prepare our statements and deliver them in the Chamber to express condemnation and denunciation, or to share new information to apprise ourselves of what happened and what is happening in Syria. We have forgotten that the impact of our statements hardly goes beyond this building or the mass media, whereas the tragedy of the bereaved Syrian people continues, with half of the Syrian population displaced and hundreds of thousands of its men, women and children killed. Allow me to express my sorrow and sympathy to any Syrian citizen who is following today's meeting, although I wonder if there is anyone in Syria who is genuinely interested in following this meeting.

Egypt voted in favour of the two draft resolutions (S/2016/846 and S/2016/847) that were put forward for voting today, which focused on a de-escalation of the situation in Syria, in particular in Aleppo. Regrettably, although we had already known that the two draft resolutions would fail, our voting simply served to express our position. Egypt can no longer tolerate the fact that the fate of the region's people is being manipulated. Today, we are simply conveying a message on the part of the biggest Arab population to the international, regional and internal Powers in Syria to end the tragedy — and end the political rivalries, ambitions and disputes, which are claiming Syrian lives — in that country.

It is not my wish to conclude my statement by expressing regret, because we still have a window of opportunity to address the Syrian crisis in earnest. If all the members of the Council were to express and confirm their desire to end the bloodshed, we would seriously consider all the various approaches contained in the two draft resolutions proposed today. Let us agree that the two draft resolutions covered key points

that should serve as a foundation for us to build upon in the coming days. We voted in favour of the following five points today.

First, it is imperative to stop the targeting of Syrian civilians and infrastructure and allow unhindered access to humanitarian aid in conjunction with the United Nations. Secondly, we must work towards implementing a cessation of hostilities in Syria that would pave the way for a full ceasefire, prioritizing Aleppo in line with resolution 2268 (2016), in tandem with enhancing the supervision and monitoring mechanisms. Thirdly, it is very important to confront certain armed groups that disregard of the will and volition of the international community, the ambitions of the Syrian people for a change towards a better future, and their determination and persistence in cooperating with terrorist groups, especially Jabhat al-Nusrah Jabhat Fatih al-Sham. Fourthly, the Security Council should shoulder its responsibility and the International Syria Support Group and its co-chairmansip must play its pivotal role in carrying out the realization of the aforementioned points. Fifthly, earnest negotiations must be launched among the Syrian parties with regard to the transitional phase stipulated in the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) and resolution 2254 (2015).

Egypt is fully prepared to work within the framework of the International Syria Support Group and the Security Council, — whether it be with the permanent or non-permanent members of the Council — to carry out and achieve the efforts to which I referred earlier.

To conclude, let me call upon members of the Security Council to work towards restoring the Council's role and facilitating open and serious discussion in ending the Syrian tragedy.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): The lonely veto and four votes in favour of your draft resolution, Sir, were a double humiliation. This text was a cynical attempt to divert attention from Russia's exercise of the veto today that once again denied any hope to the people of Aleppo. It failed because it failed to demand an immediate end to the aerial bombardment of Aleppo. It is a sham, just as Russia's hollow commitment to a political process in Syria is a sham. The indiscriminate bombing of civilians in Aleppo is sickening and barbaric. Please stop now.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): This text was a deceptive attempt to get the Security Council to ratify what Russia and the regime are doing in Aleppo, as they will undoubtedly claim that any and all of the devastation that they are raining down is directed at terrorists, not the innocent civilians and civilian infrastructure that they are very clearly striking. But I will not belabour this point. What Russia wants is for there to be more talk while they seek to take the city by brutal force. What we want is less talk and more action for them to stop the slaughter.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Unfortunately, today the Security Council has effectively shown its inability to achieve consensus on how to manage and resolve the horrible tragedy faced by the people of Syria since the beginning of the war. The fundamental reason for the lack of unity is based on the fact that certain permanent members of the Security Council are deeply involved in the conflict and supported the development of this type of asymmetric war, a new and absolutely illegal mechanism designed to overthrow Governments.

We entirely subscribe to the statement made by the representative of Egypt because, unfortunately, hundreds of thousands of Syrian people are dying on the ground and are paying the price for a disastrous policy in the Middle East. In our view, this is a warning to the non-permanent member of the Security Council, and we must thoroughly consider that we are encouraging conflicts by taking steps that are in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and everything represented by the international legal system.

We are a sovereign country, but we have no military or geopolitical interests beyond our borders. We see the need to raise our voice to ensure that the international community will defend those principles underlying the United Nations, including respect for sovereignty and the non-interference in the internal affairs of people and the concept that sovereignty lies in the people of any given country. Those are fundamental principles. No one in the Security Council can decide whether the Government of Syria is legitimate. No one in the Security Council has the right to suppress the sovereignty of the Syrian Government over its own territory.

We have already had painful experiences that need to be analysed and discussed in depth in assessing the question of whether the Security Council is fulfilling the role that it was given when the United Nations was founded. We see ourselves in the middle of a conflict between powerful countries, and we need to defend such

principles. Much pressure is being generated to ensure that brotherly countries, particularly non-permanent members, align themselves with one position or another. We appeal to everyone to respect the principles as the only means to come up with a political solution not only to the Syrian conflict, but also to the conflicts in Yemen and Palestine, among so many other countries.

The exercise of the right of veto by Russia was criticized. We believe that the right of veto serves in many instances to establish balance in situations that are otherwise totally out of balance. If only they could have exercised the right of veto in connection with the intervention in Iraq or the NATO bombings in Libya, we would not be facing the regrettable situation in which we find ourselves today. Double standards are often used in addressing a situation. Some Council members that are directly involved in the conflict tell dramatic accounts of human suffering, which are of course deeply regrettable, yet they remain in inexplicable and complicit silence when faced, for example, with the suffering of the Palestinian people during the terrible Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip, or remain inexplicably silent on the matter of other conflicts, such as the situation in Yemen.

We voted in favour of the second draft resolution (S/2016/847) proposed by the Russian Federation because we believe that, like the draft resolution proposed by New Zealand, it contained elements that could have led the Council to unite regarding the need to end civilian suffering in eastern Aleppo and throughout Syria.

I believe that once the Council has publicly demonstrated its lack of unity in that regard, it should work constructively, beyond its members' own national agendas, to find a political and negotiated solution to the tragedy. The massacres in Syria must end. State interventionism in Syria must end. The delivery of weapons to groups that are not able to disassociate themselves from terrorist groups must end. The United Nations and the Security Council must arrive at a negotiated solution to the conflict or, as already has been said, the phenomenon of terrorism will continue to bring suffering to the people of the Middle East.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): Ukraine voted against draft resolution S/2016/847, proposed by the Russian Federation, for the following reasons. We simply do not agree with tactics that aim to divert attention from the solid and meaningful draft resolution S/2016/846, which could have affected the situation on the ground and help put an end to the massacre in Aleppo. The draft resolution proposed by Russia barely mentions the devastating developments in Aleppo, which is cynical, given the gravity of the situation in that symbolic Syrian city. We also strongly condemn the attempt to put a draft resolution to the vote that has never been discussed in the Council.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has followed the escalation of the conflict in several regions of Syria and is deeply moved by the wartime suffering of the Syrian people. China strongly condemns all terrorist activities that harm and kill innocent people.

In that regard, the international community should continue to work towards and push for a political solution to the dispute through dialogue between all parties involved in the conflict, so as to stop the fighting as soon as possible. Actions taken by the Security Council concerning the situation in Syria should be able to concretely improve the situation, help push for a cessation of hostilities, support and coordinate United Nations efforts for humanitarian assistance and facilitate stronger efforts to combat terrorist groups designated by the Security Council, including the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. Such action should promote the search for a solution that is acceptable to all parties in a political process owned and led by the Syrians under the auspices of the United Nations.

The draft resolution submitted by France and Spain (S/2016/846) contains a number of important elements, such as the need for a ceasefire, a call for a political solution, improvement of the humanitarian situation, and enhanced efforts to combat terrorism. However, some of the draft resolution's provisions do not fully respect the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria. Moreover, the constructive views of some Security Council members were not incorporated. For those reasons, China had to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

The draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation to the Security Council (S/2016/847) urges the parties to immediately cease hostilities, enable access to humanitarian aid, enhance efforts to combat terrorism, and support the good offices of Special Envoy Staffan De Mistura, and calls for an early resumption of peace talks in Geneva. The draft resolution reflects a four-track strategy comprised of a ceasefire, humanitarian assistance, joint efforts in

combating terrorism and political negotiations. It also reflects respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria, with complete, comprehensive and balanced content. China voted in favour of the draft resolution and regrets that it was not adopted.

Syria is an important country in the Middle East. An immediate restoration of peace and stability is in the common interests of Syria, other countries of the region and the international community. China hopes that the Security Council will maintain the safety of the Syrian people as its first priority and remain united in order to reach consensus, pursue its efforts to push for a political solution to the conflict in Syria, work jointly to prevent the further breeding and spread of terrorism and play a positive and constructive role in maintaining peace and stability in Syria and the region.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): New Zealand voted against the draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation (S/2016/847) due to its partial and misleading nature and Russia's destructive role in the Syrian conflict and because Russia provided no scope for any negotiation on a text on such a sensitive issue — an issue to which Russia is a direct party.

Action of this kind only serves to deepen the divides in the Council that are preventing constructive action from being taken. As you earlier observed, Mr. President, New Zealand has been working on some ideas to try and bring the Council together on this most difficult issue. That we have not yet put our ideas forward has been our decision and ours alone, but I invite Russia and all Council members to work with us in the coming days to see if we can chart a course in a more positive direction.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): In this very Chamber, we have already said that we are pained by the situations in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan and in all other parts of the world where the civilian population is subject to the brutalities of war. We have also said in this very Chamber that, as we give speeches, we are pained by the fact that bombs continue to fall on the civilian population, hospitals and schools. In this very Chamber, we have also said that what is happening in Aleppo is, without any doubt, a true massacre.

Today, an end to hostilities, bombings and carnage are of the utmost importance. Allow me to add that the babies being pulled from the rubble in Aleppo are not terrorists; the old people crushed in the debris of their homes are not terrorists; the patients buried in the rubble of hospitals in Aleppo are not terrorists; and the children buried in the remains of their schools are not terrorists.

Regarding the draft resolution in document S/2016/847, my delegation abstained for reasons of procedure and of substance. Regarding procedure, the draft resolution was presented yesterday at 5 p.m. as a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. There was no possibility of negotiation. Moreover, after briefly reading through it, we noted that it included a bilateral agreement on which the Security Council had no say or any reason for being aware of it. We all know that there is a strong discrepancy between those members who would sign the agreement and those who would not, and it is not up to the Security Council to mediate in that regard.

Regarding substance, the draft resolution does not address something that is vital at the present stage, namely, putting an end to the bombing in Aleppo. My delegation is committed and will continue to work in the Security Council to relaunch a process of negotiation that will contribute to ending the current situation and channeling Syria towards a better future.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): Members of the Security Council were confronted today with a peculiar situation. They had to cast two consecutive votes on two draft resolutions on the same issue — the cessation of hostilities in Syria.

First and foremost, we would like to state our deep distress about the current humanitarian situation in Aleppo, which has left the vast majority of the city's population without access to basic necessities and life-saving assistance, while the horrific bloodshed, particularly in eastern Aleppo, has caused far too many deaths and injuries among the civilian population.

In Aleppo, we are witnessing destruction of truly historical proportions to which we in the Council can put a stop if we act constructively and decisively. The bombing of hospitals is unacceptable and we strongly condemn such actions. However, the regional and international stakeholders that have directly involved themselves in the conflict by supplying weapons and logistic support to belligerents guilty of grave human rights violations, bear the greatest responsibility for resolving this grave issue. We expect the permanent members of the Council, whose special responsibility lies in the maintenance of peace and security, to set the example by putting aside strategic interests and

mobilizing all possible political action for the sake of the Syrian civilians whom we are called upon to protect.

Even though the brave and dedicated Members of the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies continue to operate in Syria, the reality is that the latest wave of fighting in Aleppo has caused the destruction of essential infrastructure, such as schools, hospitals and ambulances, and depleted the ranks of medical staff able to provide much-needed care and assistance. The numbers of casualties, wounded and displaced are absolutely overwhelming.

We have voted here today on two draft resolutions that, in our opinion, contain constructive proposals. We find the inability to make progress on a single resolution addressing the most pressing concerns — the protection of civilians, the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a political process conducive to lasting peace in Syria — to be most unfortunate.

Angola abstained in the voting on the two resolutions. The draft resolution submitted by France and Spain (S/2016/846), in our view, does not address the fundamental issue of reviving the process conducive to a meaningful cessation of hostilities. On the contrary, it seeks to feed the acrimonious and dangerous debate among the main players in the conflict, permanent members of the Security Council and it most probably will represent the burial of the International Syrian Support Group (ISSG).

While the Russian proposal (S/2016/847) contains some positive elements with a view to relaunching a process conducive to the cessation of hostilities, Angola decided to abstain in the voting in order to avoid being dragged into the unfortunate prevailing acrimony among the members of the Council that bear the main responsibility for the conflict and the duty to find solutions to it.

I support Special Envoy De Mistura's efforts and his permanent commitment to relaunching an agreement on the cessation of hostilities, guaranteeing safe and unrestricted humanitarian access, resuming the repairs of Aleppo's damaged water and power facilities and allowing medical evacuation for urgent cases in and around the city. Surely that effort depends on the cooperation between the Russian Federation and the United States of America. We deeply regret the suspension of bilateral discussions on the cessation of hostilities between the co-Chairs of the ISSG Ceasefire Task Force. We sincerely hope that the respective Governments will be able to agree on the importance of maintaining open lines of dialogue and renewing cooperation in the search for peace and the fight against terrorism, and easing the plight of the Syrian civilians who bear the heaviest burden of the conflict.

In conclusion, after the show of unity of the Security Council on the recommendation for the next Secretary-General, today's events are a very negative signal regarding the Council's ability to contribute meaningfully to international peace and security, which we deeply regret. Angola reiterates its determination to remain engaged in the search for peace and to save lives in Syria by advancing the political process through negotiations and dialogue involving, above all, Syrians.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): We voted against the proposal submitted by the Russian Federation (S/2016/847). I repeat what I said earlier today. All aerial bombardments of Aleppo must be ended immediately. All military activities in eastern Aleppo, particularly the indiscriminate attacks that violate international humanitarian law must be halted immediately. Had the agreement of 9 September between the United States of America and Russia been in effect, we may have been able to implement measures based on that. Sadly, that is not the case. Japan cannot support the Russian proposal.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now say a few words in my national capacity. I will be very brief because we are still going to be hearing from another speaker.

The representatives of the United States of America and the United Kingdom, as usual, stuck to their provocative rhetoric. We are used to that free-flowing discourse and shall not react to it. Attempts to insult us do not upset or distract us from what is most important. But I do have two topics I would like to touch on.

The representative of the United Kingdom made an emotional appeal for putting an end to this immediately. Indeed, how about it? How about immediately putting an end to supporting various thugs around the world — terrorists, extremists and all the other amateurs exacerbating the situation in one country or another? How about putting an end to interfering in the affairs of other sovereign States? Just give up these colonial customs and leave the world in peace. The situation would improve in a great many parts of the world.

The argument made by the United States is that more action is needed. We completely agree. It took

our Minister for Foreign Affairs and the United States Secretary of State several months to work out an agreement, but the United States could not implement it or manage to separate the moderate opposition from terrorists. It could not even ensure the withdrawal of opposition groups from the Castello road so as to provide better conditions to get humanitarian aid to eastern Aleppo. Yes, more action is needed.

I think the representative of Uruguay made an important point about the fact that it is the terrorists are to blame while it is the civilians who are suffering. I would take that argument further — it is the politicians who are to blame, as they try to realize their grandiose plans all over the world while civilians suffer. And they do not even try to admit to the catastrophic mistakes, if not crimes, that result from their policies, fanning the flames of conflict and fomenting chaos in many parts of the world.

Finally, the representative of Angola expressed alarm that what is going on could mean the collapse of the International Syria Support Group. We do not agree. We believe we will be able to preserve both the multilateral formats and today's draft resolution (S/2016/847), which, as I said, we did not expect to be adopted and viewed it merely as a political demonstration. It was aimed at preserving those multilateral formats and hence what was valuable in the Russian-American agreements. While they have not been implemented, we think they can be. I would like to assure the Council that some very complex work is continuing, both multilaterally and bilaterally, and we all hope fervently that the situation in Syria can be normalized, which would undoubtedly improve the situation in eastern Aleppo. We hope that will happen as soon as possible.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Clearly, the truth unnerves the representatives of colonial Powers in the Chamber. We have seem them leave when they hear the truth being spoken. By such actions, they prove that they have malicious colonial intentions against my country and the people of Syria. Similarly, they demonstrate that their diplomacy is a diplomacy of chaos, coercion and the use of force, and it is not based on the principles of dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution. To those colleagues who walked out of the Chamber while we were still in session (see S/PV.7777), I would like to thank them because they gave me the status of permanent member instead of them.

I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on presiding over the work of the Council this month — at a time when the whole world, and our region in particular, are experiencing major, serious challenges. Such difficult challenges come as a result of the erroneous policies of some States, including permanent members of the Security Council. They are seeking to implement their own interventionist policies, which contravene the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. However, your experience and wisdom, Sir, serve to provide leadership for the work of the Council at this critical time.

Allow me to take this opportunity to condemn the cowardly act of terrorism perpetrated by the Al-Nusra Front against the Russian Embassy in Damascus a few days ago. Several Member States voted positively for the French draft resolution (S/2016/846), but they opposed releasing even a press statement condemning that attack. We are also sorry that the Council failed to adopt the draft resolution (S/2016/847) submitted with a view to achieving peace and expediting the political process in Syria by differentiating between the so-called armed opposition forces and the terrorist Al-Nusra Front. Blocking the Russian draft resolution serves to reaffirm, for the hundredth time, the lack of political will on the part of those who oposed it. They have no real political will to combat terrorism and no genuine will to reach an inter-Syrian resolution to the crisis. Clearly, differentiating between extremist terrorists and the moderate armed groups is a difficult process, akin to trying to separate enriched uranium from unenriched uranium, if there were such a thing as unenriched uranium.

I have not bothered to reflect on the French draft resolution, as it was crystal clear that it had its own objectives — clear not just to me, but to the Syrian people too. It makes me recall the one-hundredth anniversary of the infamous Sykes-Picot Agreement, a colonial agreement between France and Britain that brought continuous suffering to our people, created divides in our society and looted our wealth and resources. We think that the French draft resolution reflects the nostalgia France feels for its dark colonial past. It was under the illusion that fuelling the Syrian

crisis would create a golden opportunity for it to revive its former colonial power, which will not return.

Today, the Foreign Minister of France attempted to be the Syrian people's guardian when he spoke about what was good for them and what he, in his capacity as Foreign Minister, should do to help them — as though he were still dreaming that he represented a colonial Power that could hijack the right to speak on behalf of the Syrian people in the Council. However, French politicians should be ashamed of what they have done to Libya and to the Libyan people. And when turning our attention to the Guernica and Srebrenica massacres, we see that such massacres were the result of European competitive barbaric policies to which we, nor anyone else, bears any relation. Such policies were purely European barbaric policies.

As for the carnage in Syria today, it has been caused by mercenary foreign terrorists whoe were born in France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain and Belgium. These are terrorists who are manipulated by the intelligence agencies of Western States, the fatwas on jihad, financing from Qatar and Saudi Arabia and Turkish sponsorship for all these acts of aggression. Before I proceed with my statement, I would like to remind the French Minister of what his predecessor once said:

(*spoke in French*)

"The French jihadists are doing a good job in Syria".

(*spoke in Arabic*)

This is the policy of France, as expressed by the Foreign Minister of France at the time, Laurent Fabius, in 2012.

Elements and provisions of the French draft resolution prove yet again that they have malicious intentions towards my country. From the very beginning, successive French Governments have sought to undermine the Syrian State in its totality, not simply targeting a particular Government. The draft resolution clearly calls for an end to the operations conducted by the Syrian Army and its allies to defend the Syrian people and combat terrorism, on behalf of all the members of the Security Council, from the Al-Nusra Front, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and affiliated terrorist groups. It seems that whenever the Syrian Army and its allies gain ground against the terrorist groups — namely, the Al-Nusra Front — well-known members of the Council rush to rescue them from their inevitable defeat by convening meetings or putting forth draft resolutions that completely disregard the suffering of the Syrian people. They seek only to rescue the terrorists, whether in Aleppo or in other cities and regions of Syria.

We had hoped that this unprecedented and tireless effort by France to push for the adoption of its resolution — similarly with the draft resolution by Russia — would have been geared towards finding a political solution to the crisis in Syria, led by Syrians without any foreign intervention or preconditions. We had hoped that, instead of submitting a draft resolution to impose a no-fly zone in our own air space, France and its allies would have imposed a moratorium on the support provided by their Governments to terrorism, which they then export to Syria. We had hoped that the Government of France would be able to answer the question that the Syrian people continue to ask, that is, whether the money from the Total oil deal, the Qatari gas deal and the Saudi Arabia arms deals were worth the Syrian blood spilled?

For more than six years, the United States, France and Britain have persistently called for one meeting after another. They have sponsored draft resolutions, presidential statements and press statements in the Council with one purpose, namely, to deceive the public into believing that they are seeking to resolve the crisis in my country. Meanwhile, they have launched media, diplomatic and political campaigns to falsely promote certain ideas, including that the situation taking place in Syria is a confrontation between the so-called moderate armed opposition and Government forces, which they accuse of committing war crimes. They completely disregard the fact that their policies have jeopardized the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians in Syria due to their continued support for the armed terrorist groups that have used civilians as human shields.

In response to remarks by some colleagues who talked about targeting hospitals, the fact is that in eastern Aleppo terrorists have turned the largest and most important eye hospital in the Middle East into a base for their military operations.

I would like to remind members that, since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, the Security Council has held 75 official formal meetings, 97 consultations and 8 Arria Formula meetings. It has also adopted 17 resolutions, in addition to releasing a number of presidential and press statements, on the situation in

Syria. However, those efforts have not prevented the world terrorist diaspora from destroying my country, Syria. I would like to remind the Council that the United States has used its veto 77 times, Britain 33 times and France 19 times. The representatives of those countries have no shame. When they block draft resolutions, they simply call for an end to the Israeli occupation of our lands and justice for the Palestinian people.

It is self-evident that the support programmes provided to "moderate armed groups" by the United States, as well as by some regional and Arab countries following the paymasters of the region, continue to reach the hands of ISIL and the Al-Nusra Front. These groups, along with their affiliates, are terrorist groups. The Syrian people have rights, and these countries are claiming that they seek to achieve their interests. They should consider the logic and the mechanisms that govern their approach towards Syria. The United States has estbalished a programme to train fighters that it has pre-determined as moderate: according to officials, the United States has spent $500 million to train 49 fighters. Forty-four of them took weapons provided by the United States and, as soon as they reached Syrian terrority, joined the terrorist Al-Nusra Front. That leaves five, and we have no idea where they are now.

The United States, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have provided arms and money to the Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade in the southern region of Syria and the occupied Golan Heights. This Brigade has announced its allegiance to ISIL. Those countries have insisted that Harakat Nur al-Din al-Zanki was moderate, despite it being a terrorist organization supported by Turkey and its claiming of responsibility for its crimes in Aleppo. They have in fact now officially joined the Al-Nusra Front. Therefore, all of those "moderate" armed groups are now affiliated with ISIL. The most recent incident involves the Suqour Jabal al-Zawiya Brigade, which, supported by the United States, has announced its allegiance to the Fateh al-Sham Army — the new name of the terrorist group Al-Nusra Front.

I would like here to mention 1,800 electronic messages that were deleted from the inbox of the former United States Secretary of State. Those messages included details on consignments of weapons that were transferred to armed terrorist groups in Syria from Libya through Turkey, by decision of the American Administration.

In implementing such destructive policies, these countries have relied on a misleading political media campaign to convince global public opinion that they are fighting terrorism and that the terrorists that they fund, support, harbour and transfer into Syria from more than 100 States are either "moderate" opposition or "first responders". Recently, the term "White Helmets" has been used to refer to them, and they have even been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. I have with me pictures that show these "moderate" members of the opposition — the White Helmets — with one of them firing an rocket-propelled grenad at aeroplanes. By the way, he is a physician. We have dozens of similar pictures, if any Council members would like to take a look. I would also like to point out that the founder of these malicious White Helmets is in fact James Le Mesurier, an intelligence officer from Britain.

As the United States-based Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity recently reported, the Pentagon paid $540 million to the British public relations firm Bell Pottinger, which typically renders services to Chile and Saudi Arabia, to develop an aggressive propaganda campaign against the Syrian Government. The firm fabricates YouTube videos, photos, video clips and so on.

The United States of America formed an international coalition under the pretext of fighting ISIL and other terrorist organizations, including organizations for which they have, since 2003, provided fertile ground for them to spread. However, the facts on the ground have proved that, since the establishment of the so-called coalition, ISIL has expanded and gained more ground, because that coalition has not been seriously combating terrorism — to the contrary. The coalition air forces have been responsible for killing hundreds of Syrian military personnel and civilians, destroying infrastructure and economic installations and providing air drops with weapons and military supplies to terrorist organizations to spread still more chaos and wreak havoc in my country. However, according to the coalition, all that was simply a mistake. Therefore, the coalition air forces have killed civilians, destroyed infrastructure, aided and armed terrorists and then justified those crimes by calling them simply mistakes that need to be forgiven. Days later they repeat those same mistakes.

Honestly, one now needs to decipher the actual strategy of the United States-led coalition based on a code based of repeated mistakes. Those offences

appear to be governed by a systematic, intentional policy, as was the case when their aeroplanes targeted the positions of the Syrian Army in Deir ez-Zor. That attack actually exposed dozens of civilians to the ISIL threat. They even had the audacity to request that safe humanitarian corridors be opened for the terrorists to maintain their dignity. Did the United States, Britain and France open safe humanitarian corridors to protect the "moderate" terrorists of Al-Qaida in Afghanistan, or for those who committed the massacres at *Charlie Hebdo* or the Bataclan Theatre — or in Nice, California, Boston, Chicago, New York or London? Why have they failed to open such humanitarian corridors in Europe and the United States for terrorists to escape?

The United States representative said, "we must learn from the lessons of the past". I would like to tell him: I hope that the United States can do that. I hope that the United States could learn from their mistakes in Viet Nam, Cambodia, Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya and Africa. I hope that he would recall and apologize for what they did to innocent Iraqis — the 408 civilians they killed on 13 February 1991 in the Amiriyah shelter in Baghdad.

My Government reaffirms that it will continue to cooperate with the United Nations and its specialized agencies to implement the monthly humanitarian response plan. We have approved the October response plan and wish to note that the failure to fully implement it is because of the practices of armed terrorist groups and their allies that continue to obstruct humanitarian access. Those groups continue to target convoys and humanitarian workers and to loot the assistance provisions. The most recent attack targeted the humanitarian assistance convoy headed to Oram Al-Kubra, in rural Aleppo, on 19 September, which led to the deaths of a number of Syrian citizens and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC). They looted supplies and burned the trucks. The "moderate" armed groups have denied access to SARC staff to deliver assistance to a number of areas. Those are facts of which United Nations agency workers in Syria are well aware. We have initiated an investigation into the attack against the United Nations-SARC convoy in Oram Al-Kubra and will provide the Council with the results of the investigation when it is concluded.

The fact that we are sitting in the Chamber today at this meeting to consider the situation in eastern Aleppo as some shed crocodile tears is a direct result of the United States shirking its agreement reached with the Russian Federation on 9 September. That agreement was supposed to differentiate between the moderate armed groups and the Al-Nusra Front. The Syrian Arab Government has been committed to the cessation of hostilities agreement and has taken action to implement its provisions and to deliver assistance in Aleppo. However, the fact is that the United States has not been honouring its obligations. Terrorist groups, supported by the United States and its allies, continue to violate the agreement and are regrouping to launch new attacks, all of which has led to the end the cessation of hostilities agreement and to the continuing deterioration of the situation in Aleppo after the terrorists killed 157 Syrian soldiers and 300 civilians in eastern Aleppo.

In conclusion, the blood being spilled in our country is our blood. We are the victims of a terrorist war and its pain, anguish and torment. It is ours and no one else's. It is the height of hypocrisy and falsification of evidence that those sponsors of terrorism actually shed crocodile tears on this humanitarian crisis. We will continue to fight terrorism, and that continues on a parallel track with the commitment to reach a political solution through intra-Syrian dialogue wherein Syrians and no one else decides on the future of Syria, with no foreign intervention.

In addition, I wish to call upon those who have shed crocodile tears for the Syrian people and to advise them to shed genuine tears for the 250 Yemenis killed today by Western air forces — with Western aeroplanes used by the Saudis.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of New Zealand has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): I am used to the fantastical reveries of the Syrian representative. Very little of what he says can be relied upon as accurate. But when he tells blatant lies about the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Syrian people, I must speak up. The record is clear. The delays in the delivery of humanitarian aid, the removal of medical equipment and the other obstructions that are put in the way of United Nations convoys — all the responsibility lies very much with the Syrian regime.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I did not want to respond to my colleague, because I am in constant contact with him and I always try to explain to him what is going on in my country regarding the humanitarian crisis we are facing. However, I did not expect him make the mistake of calling me the representative of a regime, especially as he is an experienced diplomat and a member of the Council. He is supposed to respect international legitimacy and he should address me as the representative of my country, the Syrian Arab Republic. That is the first mistake.

The second mistake is that it seems that the Permanent Representative of New Zealand and other colleagues do not read what we send to them. We have addressed a compendium of 500 letters to the Council on behalf of the Government of Syria concerning international terrorism sponsored by countries known to all. We have been sending such letters since the beginning of the crisis. It would seem that my colleague, the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, has not read them. We have sent 60 letters, addressed to the Permanent Representative of New Zealand among others, on the use of chemical weapons by terrorists in Syria. It appears that some Council members do not read what we send them. I would therefore urge my colleagues to read these letters, which would definitely help them to see the situation clearly.

We in Syria have fallen victim to the misunderstandings of some and the misleading lies of others. We, as diplomats, have the responsibility to correct such misunderstandings. We should not lie to one another.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7786

Security Council

Distr.: General
10 October 2016

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 7786th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 10 October 2016, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 10 October 2016, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 7786th meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

"The President invited Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, to participate in the meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing by Ms. Honoré.

"Members of the Council, Ms. Honoré and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

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United Nations S/PV.7787

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7787th meeting
Monday, 10 October 2016, 11 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Churkin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Méndez Graterol

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2016/824)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-31535 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2016/824)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Central African Republic to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Mr. Abderrazzak Laassel, Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Deputy Permanent Representative of Morocco.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/824, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): The Council has before it the report of the Secretary-General (S/2016/824) on the situation in the Central African Republic and on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). I would like to briefly update the Council on key developments since the issuance of the report.

We are at the end of the rainy season — a traditionally volatile period — which has been used by armed groups and other spoilers to advance their interests. Last week, on 4 October, tensions flared when a member of the Central African Armed Forces, the former of head of the personal security team of the interim President Samba-Panza, was shot and killed in the predominantly Muslim neighbourhood of PK5 in the third district of Bangui by a gunman reportedly affiliated with a self-defence group from PK5. In retaliatory acts of violence, a total of 12 people were killed and another 20 wounded by some by uncontrolled elements of the Central African Armed Forces, self-defence groups and unknown perpetrators. Fourteen people are still missing, but may be hiding.

MINUSCA acted decisively to prevent an outbreak of intercommunal violence, including by securing the perimeter of the PK5 neigbourhood. It also engaged with the Central African Republic authorities at the highest level to coordinate the response. Representatives of the Government of the Central African Republic and the Muslim community called for calm. President Touadéra ordered an investigation into the killings, including the reprisal actions. The President also activated — for the first time — the joint coordination mechanism between MINUSCA and the national security and defence forces. Joint patrols were undertaken and MINUSCA adjusted its protection efforts to better and more directly respond to the needs of civilians and to encourage community dialogue. Calm has since largely returned to Bangui, but the tension remains palpable. For example, on 7 October the body of a young Muslim man was dumped by alleged elements of the Central African Armed Forces in front of one of MINUSCA's camp. The Government, MINUSCA and civil society leaders are making an effort to break the cycle of violence and put an end to impunity.

In the provinces, in the north-west and in Kaga-Bandoro, recent clashes between anti-Balaka and ex-Séléka factions and retaliatory attacks against the civilian population have resulted in significant loss of human life and forced 3,200 people to flee their homes. The more than 16 attacks on aid groups in the region in September alone forced many organizations to temporarily relocate staff and reduce or suspend their operations. MINUSCA has enhanced its uniformed personnel deployments and used its good offices in these areas to protect civilians and reduce tensions.

Meanwhile, in the north-east of the country, members of some ex-Séléka factions have continued to gather in the town of Bria for an assembly, which some want to use to reunite the ex-Séléka. MINUSCA, in line with its mandate, maintains a robust posture in the area. The Mission continues to enforce the weapons-free zone and to communicate its intent to arrest any combatant caught in town with a weapon.

In stark contrast with these worrying developments, the Central African authorities continued to make progress in implementing President Touadéra's vision

for the country, including by engaging the armed groups to start a formal dialogue on the launch of the national programme on disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and repatriation. The first meeting of the consultative monitoring committee is expected to be convened in Bangui on 12 October by President Touadera. Representatives of 11 out of the 14 armed groups are expected to participate. Those refusing to attend include the ex-Séléka Front patriotique pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique; the Return, Reclamation and Rehabilitation, or the 3R; and the anti-Balaka Mokom faction.

In line with its strategic objective, MINUSCA has supported all the Government's outreach and awareness-raising efforts to help lay the groundwork for the dialogue. Last Wednesday, MINUSCA met with ex-Séléka representatives in Bria and urged them to join the first committee meeting. Indeed, many of the leaders agreed to participate and reiterated their commitment to forging lasting peace, while nonetheless noting their concerns over the Government's commitment to inclusive solutions. In this regard, the ex-Séléka assembly in Bria can be seen as an effort to strengthen the negotiation position of certain armed groups before the dialogue.

Continued international support for the Central African people in their endeavours to stabilize the country is now more critical than ever. The importance of the donors' conference, hosted by the European Union in Brussels on 17 November, cannot be overemphasized. In previous crises in Central Africa, the international community often failed to sustain its engagement in the country over time, which critically undermined stabilization efforts. While the primary responsibility for the restoration of peace and stability rests with the Central Africans, the international community must also keep its word. I would like to mention that, in a demonstration of the United Nations commitment to peace in the country, the Deputy Secretary-General agreed to lead the Organization's delegation in Brussels.

Preparations for the Brussels conference have benefited from a unity of effort between the international community and the Central African Government. The country's needs for the next five years have been jointly assessed by the Government, the United Nations, the European Union and the World Bank. As a political complement to these efforts, I welcome President Touadéra's personal commitment to strengthening cooperation between the Central African Republic and the international community through the mutual accountability framework, sometimes called the "compact", which is in development. At the ministerial-level meeting held on 23 September on the margins of the general debate, President Touadéra announced his intention to finalize this mutual accountability framework before the Brussels conference.

It is therefore more critical than ever to maintain a positive momentum to build peace in the Central African Republic. Important progress has inarguably been made so far, but there is a great need for it. The country's institutions must be strengthened in a spirit of inclusiveness to make progress in national reconciliation. Key reforms must be undertaken in the security and defence sectors. The promotion and protection of human rights needs to be strengthened, and impunity must be brought to an end. Inclusive economic development must be fostered. State authority under the rule of law must be extended. Finally, basic services for all must be improved.

Recent events show that the situation remains fragile, and spoilers are still active on both sides, I would say. Central African institutions must do everything in their power and more to stop attacks against humanitarian actors and help create the conditions for the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, an area that has seen very little progress. More than ever, MINUSCA and the international community must stand firmly by the side of the Central Africans to address these challenges.

Everything that can be done, in particular by the members of the Council, to rally the greatest number of Member States, including non-traditional donors, to support the country ahead of the Brussels conference should be done. With such concerted and persistent effort, there is a good chance that we can help Central Africans to lay down the foundations for a lasting peace in a country that has suffered for too long.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Laassel.

Mr. Laassel: I would like to start by Ambassador Hilale's apologies for his absence today. He was in fact here in the Chamber earlier this morning, but he was called to speak at the Fourth Committee. I am therefore making this statement on his behalf.

I would like to start by congratulating the Russian Federation on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October, and by thanking you, Mr. President, for your invitation to speak in the Security Council today. It is always a pleasure and an honour for Morocco to brief the Council on behalf of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), in its capacity as Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the PBC.

I would also like to welcome and support the comprehensive briefing delivered by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, on the situation in the Central African Republic, and commend him for his tireless efforts aimed at building peace in that country and for the cooperation of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with the PBC.

It is my pleasure to brief the members of the Council on Mr. Hilale's most recent visit to the Central African Republic, in particular on his participation at the ninth meeting of the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic (ICG-CAR). The report of his mission will be circulated to all members in due course, following the usual practice.

On the occasion of his second visit to Bangui, Mr. Hilale was invited to participate at the ninth meeting of the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic, co-chaired by the African Union and the Republic of the Congo. As mentioned in his report, the meeting was attended by 25 countries and by representatives of several organizations. Strong regional mobilization was noted during this meeting and should be encouraged and welcomed.

The main issues raised during the Bangui meeting were as follows. The first tier of issues were political issues; security issues; disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration (DDRR) issues; and security sector reform (SSR) issues. The second tier of issues involved justice, reconciliation and the fight against impunity. The third tier of issues related to the humanitarian situation, refugees and internally displaced persons. The fourth tier of issues related to recovery and peacebuilding. Since each of those topics are addressed in the report, I will limit myself to highlighting the main issues discussed during the Bangui meeting and in Mr. Hilale's various exchanges throughout his visit. While other issues such as the humanitarian or the economic situations will not be addressed in this briefing, they remain of paramount importance.

The Government expressed its strong commitment to the success of the DDRR, SSR and national reconciliation programmes based on the recommendations of the Bangui Forum. Presidential decrees on the coordination of these three programmes were promulgated in order to support the efforts of the Government in this regard in a coordinated manner. Efforts were also made by the Government in the implementation of the Special Criminal Court.

With respect to disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration, interlocutors expressed the need for strong political and financial support. The main task of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) will be to support the Government in implementing a DDRR programme. To date, the World Bank is the main partner, financing approximately half of the estimated budget. This is not the first time that a DDRR programme has been planned for the Central African Republic. It is therefore important to benefit from the lessons learned from past DDRR programmes. DDRR is a vast and complex issue that will have a crucial impact on the stabilization of the country.

The main problem remains funding, but other aspects, such as the identification of beneficiaries or the inclusiveness of the entire process, are also important and must be dealt with carefully. For its part, the Government is encouraged to redouble its efforts and pursue its dialogue in an inclusive manner with all armed groups. We welcome the fact that dialogue with the armed groups is scheduled to restart in the coming days, as Mr. Ladsous mentioned earlier. We take this opportunity to commend the commitment of the Government, MINUSCA and the World Bank in this regard and call upon all involved stakeholders to increase their efforts aimed at investing in building the foundation of a successful DDRR process as early as possible.

Secondly, with respect to security sector reform in the Central African Republic, SSR is crucial for the stabilization of the country, in particular with regard to the extension of State authority. In accordance with its mandate, MINUSCA, with the backing of other partners, has the challenging task of supporting the Government in this critical endeavour. In this regard,

we welcome the involvement of the European Union, which initiated a military training and advisory mission with the objective of training two battalions of the national armed forces with a view to constituting a republican and professional army under the authority of the Government.

We also welcome the commitment of the countries of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, announced during the ICG-CAR meeting, to train one battalion per country. The implementation of this commitment will be an important step towards the success of the programme, and further bilateral support is also encouraged given the important needs of the country. Based on the draft national security policy, we note that the SSR programme will also need to include the reinforcement of the police and gendarmerie, as well as a clarification of their respective mandates, with the aim of extending the authority of the State to the entire territory of the country.

Thirdly, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/824) and during the ICG-CAR meeting, national reconciliation remains a matter of concern, particularly due to the fact that the national reconciliation strategy has still not been adopted. However, some local initiatives are encouraging, especially the activities of the religious platform, which is still playing a vital role in that area. The PBC, with its experience in this area, remains committed to supporting all kinds of initiatives aimed at addressing communal tensions, and welcomes the Secretary-General's commitment to supporting the Government in this regard.

Last but not least, there is the issue of the rule of law. As has often been mentioned, national reconciliation, in particular, but also to a certain extent DDRR and SSR, cannot be successful without addressing the issue of impunity. I am pleased to report that some key steps leading to the establishment of the Special Criminal Court have been taken, thereby allowing for the launch of the recruitment process for national and international magistrates.

The Central African Republic has come a long way since its last relapse into conflict. Since 2012, the Council has been following closely the development of the situation in the country and has witnessed the positive steps achieved recently following the return of constitutional order. Yet the path to stability is still being hampered by many challenges, and a risk into relapse is, unfortunately, still a plausible scenario. As illustrated by Mr. Ladsous, the security situation remains volatile. That is probably the main reason that the support of the international community will be crucial in the coming months. We are aware that many situations around the world need the Council's urgent attention, but the singularity of the situation in the Central African Republic, its geographical situation, the impact of the crisis on the region and the relatively modest investments needed should make the case of the Central African Republic a priority for the international community.

For all those reasons, it is our collective duty to ensure the success of the important next step, which is the upcoming Donors Conference to be held in Brussels on 17 November. The national strategy for recovery and peace consolidation, as well as the framework for mutual accountability with the international community, will need to be shared in advance to ensure an optimal preparation for the Donors Conference. In the upcoming weeks, the configuration will organize an event with the main stakeholders in order to inform PBC members of the specifics of the Conference and contribute to making it a success. It is time we translate our efforts into tangible contributions that can improve the lives of women and men in the Central African Republic.

I would like to conclude by thanking the Central African authorities for their hospitality and their constant support for the activities of the configuration. I would also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Onanga-Anyanga and his team for their assistance and all of their efforts.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Laassel for the briefing that he made on behalf of Ambassador Hilale.

I shall now give the floor to the member of the Council who wishes to make a statement.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, for his briefing on the report of the Secretary-General (S/2016/824) and an update on the most recent developments in the Central African Republic. I also thank Mr. Laassel for his briefing of the report of the Chair of the Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Uruguay acknowledges that the Central African Republic took a decisive step this year with a democratically elected President taking up office, the formation of an inclusive Government and the setting up of a National Assembly, among other important milestones. Those achievements must now be consolidated by addressing the root causes of the crisis. To that end, we encourage the new President and his Government to take specific, visible measures to achieve national reconciliation. In that regard, Uruguay welcomes the various reforms being implemented by the current Government, with the support of United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and other international partners. Such reforms are being implemented in the defence, security and justice sectors, as well as in the national disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration programme. Nonetheless, in spite of the progress being made, the Central African Republic continues to face monumental challenges, in particular with regard to the humanitarian and security situations.

Uruguay remains concerned about the country's fragile humanitarian situation, as more than 2.3 million people — virtually half of the country's population — remains dependent upon humanitarian assistance. It is also estimated that there are more than 450,000 refugees in neighbouring countries and approximately 380,000 internally displaced. In that regard, we trust that national authorities, with the support of the humanitarian community, MINUSCA and other international partners, will continue their efforts to ease the situation and meet the basic humanitarian needs of the population.

With regard to the security situation, increasing tensions among communities and clashes among armed groups are a source of concern. In addition, crime and serious human rights abuses by armed groups continue to pose a threat to civilians. In that respect, Uruguay condemns the incidents sparked by the murder of a Central African Republic army officer, on Tuesday 4 October, in the capital of Bangui, which have, to date, led to the death of, at least, 11 civilians. To end the insecurity and human rights violations, it is critical to combat impunity. In that regard, it should be noted that the Government is committed to selecting and appointing magistrates in order to set up the Special Criminal Court before the end of the year, which would help to put an end to impunity.

In conclusion, Uruguay highlights the efforts made by the Government of the Central African Republic, which, with the support of the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union, is making progress on a national strategy to restore and rebuild peace, whose outcome document could be used as an instrument to mobilize resources during the Donors Conference scheduled to be held in Brussels on 17 November.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Central African Republic.

Ms. Kpongo (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): I would like in particular to thank Mr. Ladsous for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2016/824), which was comprehensive and focused the attention of all of the members of the Security Council on what remains to be done in the Central African Republic.

Despite the efforts that have already been made and those that the Government, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the international community continue to make, the situation in the Central African Republic remains extremely fragile. That is why it is important to continue to pay particular attention to the situation. We are not talking about inter-community actions; these are really provocations. I would prefer to hear mention being made of gangs and of people who snub peace in our country in order to ensure that we do not achieve the goals we have set.

It is important to ensure that resolution 2301 (2016) is implemented and, in particular when it comes to non-State armed groups. It is those armed groups that continue to sow the seeds of the terror throughout the country, and even in Bangui. When someone is killed and it cannot be explained, it elicits a negative reaction and more people die as a result. It is crucial for the Security Council to continue to support MINUSCA's efforts and to ensure that all material and logistical resources needed are supplied, as mentioned in the report. This report should compel us to do more and to realize that there is still much left to be done. If we do not pay attention, what is occurring now could continue and the very implementation of the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration programme, and even reconciliation, could pose more problems.

We have already engaged in dialogue in the Central African Republic in the past. We have tried to ensure that communities work with each other. After the elections and when the transition ended, the situation was going well. But regrettably, we acknowledge that the efforts we had been making to achieve the goals we set are now being threatened. That is why I will continue to support the work of MINUSCA, of the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and of all those who participated in the latest contact group meeting, so that we can work together to ensure that our country will succeed in re-establishing peace. When we talk about the Brussels Conference, what we reap there will fall short. We will still face the issue of security and that of struggling to ensure that every Central African can enjoy safety and go about their business in peace. The President has emphasized that in his statements, even following the recent unfortunate events. He has underscored that he is not the President of a particular group, but that he is the President of all Central Africans. And we as Central Africans must stress that point ourselves in order that people understand that the time has come for us to come together to work as one.

I thank the Security Council for having once again considered this agenda item and for convening this meeting on the subject of the Secretary-General's report in order to understand that much remains to be done.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now invite members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7788

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7788th meeting
Tuesday, 11 October 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Iliichev	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gimolieca
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2016/833)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2016/833)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Maman Sidikou,Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to participate in this meeting

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/833, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Maman Sidikou, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Ambassador Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta, Permanent Representative of Egypt, in his capacity as the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I give the floor to Mr. Sidikou.

Mr. Sidikou (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to speak on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I shall focus my remarks on the political, humanitarian and security situations, the challenges facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the support that the Security Council could offer to the collective efforts of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and international and regional partners.

The political situation remains extremely fragile in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which contributes to increased tensions, the ongoing contraction of the political space, and a very real risk that the situation could deteriorate further. Despite the efforts of the Facilitator appointed by the African Union, Mr. Edem Kodjo, and the continued support of the United Nations and the international community for those efforts, progress in the national dialogue has been limited, although we have recently heard that developments are moving apace in the right direction.

In September, Mr. Kodjo presented a proposal for consideration by the parties to reach agreement, first, on the duration of a political transition and the role of the outgoing President beyond the interim period; secondly, the establishment of a transitional Government and key portfolios; and thirdly, a date for the holding of the presidential election. However, due to the boycott of the national dialogue by the opposition coalition known as the Rassemblement des forces politiques et sociales acquises au changement, and more recently the withdrawal of the Conférence épiscopale nationale du Congo from the dialogue, agreement on these issues has not been reached. Moreover, the dialogue process is not as inclusive as one might have hoped.

In the course of one session of the national dialogue, the National Independent Electoral Commission announced that the holding of presidential, parliamentary and provincial elections in one day would not be technically possible until 18 November 2018, following the registration of voters to be completed 31 July 2017. This announcement has provoked strong protests from several political opposition parties that believe that Commission has been instrumentalized to keep President Joseph Kabila in power beyond the presidential term limits set out in the Constitution. On 4 October in Kinshasa, the Rassemblement held a conclave whose recommendations reiterate, inter alia, a call for the resignation of President Kabila on 19 December. The conclave also announced its intention to organize political demonstrations across the country on 19 October.

(*spoke in English*)

Against this background of political polarization, serious violence erupted on 19 and 20 September following large-scale demonstrations in Kinshasa and elsewhere. The United Nations has confirmed the killing of at least 49 civilians in the clashes that took place — 38 by gunshot — while others were burned alive or killed by machete. More than 140 civilians were injured, and there are unconfirmed reports of dozens of other casualties. Four police officers were also killed, allegedly by demonstrators, during the clashes.

MONUSCO investigations have documented the involvement of State and non-State actors alike. We have also documented the involvement of the Garde républicaine in several instances of violence against civilians. There were hundreds of arrests reported, and more than 100 people were initially detained in a military camp before being transferred to State courts. Unfortunately, in the immediate aftermath of the clashes, MONUSCO was denied access to detention centres, several hospitals and morgues, making confirmation of the casualties and arrests difficult. Moreover, those demonstrations impacted civil and political rights in other parts of the country where demonstrators were also reportedly arbitrarily arrested and ill-treated by State agents.

While not directly related to the electoral context, the situation prevailing in Kananga, the capital of Kasai Central province, is also a matter for serious concern, with reports of several clashes between militiamen affiliated to a traditional leader, including child soldiers, and State actors, which impinge on the human rights of the civilian population, including children's rights, causing widespread displacements. Here again, MONUSCO's presence in Kananga is very limited, and the force is not present, which is an additional risk to protecting civilians. Nonetheless, the Mission is actively monitoring the situation and has deployed a team of human rights and political affairs officers to better monitor, report on and analyse developments in the area. We have also engaged with political authorities, local leaders and members of civil society to find a peaceful solution to this crisis.

For our part, we have consistently called for restraint on the part of all actors, including opposition members, and I have personally raised our concerns with my Government interlocutors about the role of State actors in the violence. Throughout the past months I have worked with other stakeholders, including the diplomatic community, civil society and, importantly, the Church, to build bridges between the Facilitator — Mr. Kodjo — the presidential majority and opposition groups. I have also liaised closely with the Government to take confidence-building measures to create political space for dialogue, notably through the release of political prisoners and allowing media to operate without constraint.

The Mission has also reinforced its presence in Kinshasa with additional assets, which will allow for a greater presence and improved monitoring of the situation. The Mission will continue monitoring closely and reporting on the political, security and human rights situation. Also, MONUSCO will continue to impress upon the national authorities and security services the need to manage public order in accordance with the Constitution and international standards. An important effort will also continue to be dedicated to engaging all political actors on the need to find a peaceful resolution to differences linked to the electoral process and the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

While much attention is currently focused on the political situation, I would like to highlight the fact that the security situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains very worrying and is characterized by severe protection-of-civilians risks in many communities. Those tensions are only increasing throughout the electoral period.

In the Beni area, where a serious massacre took place in August, small-scale attacks on civilians by suspected elements of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) have continued in recent weeks. Violence in the broader northern Lubero area has contributed to a surge of displacement, with more than 100,000 people displaced in the past three months alone.

In that context, the protection of civilians remains the highest priority of MONUSCO, one that requires every component of the Mission to play a role. Of critical importance is the ability of the Mission to act quickly and effectively to early-warning threats of violence, based on a solid understanding of the dynamics of a given situation. In Beni, where protection threats are severe, MONUSCO has established a joint analysis-collection and early-warning cell, which brings together civilian, police and force elements to provide cross-cutting analysis and direction to the Mission's operations. This is a positive development that has already enhanced the

Mission's response and effectiveness. We are looking to further develop those capacities to support the Mission's tailored strategies against all priority armed groups, including the newly mandated area of criminal networks in resolution 2277 (2016).

In support of those strategies, MONUSCO has continued to carry out military operations against armed groups, based on solid cooperation between the force and the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC). In Eringeti, ongoing joint operations against ADF positions over the past several months have dislodged ADF elements from several key locations and allowed the FARDC to establish a more consistent presence in the affected areas. Those operations against the ADF have seen the FARDC in the front lines, supported closely by MONUSCO. The operations have cleared key ADF camps in the so-called triangle area and have disrupted their operations and supply lines. The challenge ahead will now be to consolidate the gains and assist the FARDC in building up its control in the area.

Robust peacekeeping requires a proactive approach and looking to deter violence before it happens. I believe the Security Council could usefully reinforce that message with the troop-contributing countries as we continue to work together to make the Mission more effective in its protection mandate.

In the context of the continued violence in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I would like to highlight an immediate concern with regard to the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme. Following violence in the DDR camps in Kamina and Kitona over the summer, the Government initiated the return of more than 1,000 ex-combatants to communities in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While the reintegration of ex-combatants into communities is an essential part of the DDR process, that move was taken before the Government and the World Bank-funded partners had adequately prepared. Without sufficient sensitization and preparation, there is a risk that those ex-combatants may cycle back into armed groups, or exacerbate already high tensions in communities where they return. MONUSCO has worked to implement its community violence-reduction programme to support the transition of ex-combatants back into civilian life. However, it is critical that the Government, the World Bank and implementing partners move quickly to put in place the necessary community reintegration measures, if further returns from the camps are to take place in a constructive manner.

As I mentioned, population movements in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular have increased the risks to already vulnerable communities. That has stretched already strained humanitarian delivery systems beyond their means. I am pleased to report that the humanitarian community has brought life-saving assistance to more than 3.5 million people this year, but that still falls far short of those in urgent need. Currently, the 2016 humanitarian appeal of $690 million is only half funded. With continued displacements, an additional 350,000 refugees arriving from South Sudan and epidemics, such as the recent outbreak of cholera, we expect the needs to continue to grow in 2017. I hope the Council will join me in urging for greater support to those most in need in the the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Democratic Republic of Congo has entered a period of extreme risk to its stability. The electoral crisis has become a constitutional crisis, with deepening political polarization and no immediate resolution in sight. Actors on all sides appear more and more willing to resort to violence to achieve their ends, while the space for constructive political activity has shrunk still further. If that trajectory continues, I believe large-scale violence is all but inevitable. And while MONUSCO will do everything it can within its mandate to protect civilians, the scope of the threats dramatically outstrip the Mission's capabilities.

The only solution is for the parties to re-engage in an inclusive process that charts a peaceful path forward for the country. I have remained actively engaged with all of the national, regional and international stakeholders, and I believe there is a chance for the key parties to come together in a credible, inclusive manner. However, they will not do so without engagement by all of us, including the Security Council. I hope the Council will speak collectively and individually to reinforce the following key messages.

First, the Rassemblement des forces politiques et sociales acquises au changement and other key stakeholders currently boycotting should be encouraged to return to the dialogue process. Secondly, the Government should be encouraged to undertake direct confidence-building measures with the opposition, including steps to ensure the rights of peaceful political activity are preserved and ensure direct engagement

between President Kabila and the leadership of the Rassemblement, namely, Mr. Tshisekedi.

Thirdly, there should be no impunity for any actor perpetrating political violence. Finally, the regional organizations, that is, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Economic Community of Central African States, working in close consultation with the United Nations, need to engage more directly, including through efforts to designate a high-level emissary to help bridge the political divide.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, I should like to stress that the coming period will almost certainly be extremely difficult. The tipping point in the serious violence could be reached very quickly. I believe that the Council should remain actively seized of the situation and endeavour to hold regular exchanges with the Secretariat leadership and MONUSCO in coming months.

I am very grateful for the opportunity given me to convey to the Council certain observations on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and I hope that together, along with the Congolese people, we can chart a more positive course for the country.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Sidikou for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Aboulatta.

Mr. Aboulatta: At the outset, I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for having provided me with this opportunity to brief the Council in my capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

This is my first time briefing the Council in this open format; I should like to stress that Egypt has been honoured to chair this Committee since the beginning of its membership in the Security Council.

During my most recent briefing to the Council, in closed consultations last June, I highlighted some of the findings and recommendations contained in the final report of the Group of Experts, extended pursuant to resolution 2198 (2015), and also touched upon the Committee's consideration of the report. I also provided a brief overview of possible activities that were being considered by the Committee.

In my statement today, I intend to provide an update on the work of the Committee since my last briefing and discuss possible avenues for enhancing the effectiveness of the sanctions regime.

Egypt, together with the members of the Committee, is fully aware of the tremendous challenges facing the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly this year. Members of the Committee are determined to ensure that the work of the Committee and its Group of Experts contribute significantly to achieving peace and stability in the country. It was within this context that I visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda from 1 to 6 August. The trip itself represented only the second time since the establishment of the Committee in 2004 that a Chair of the Committee had travelled to the Great Lakes region. In this connection, I should like to extend my utmost appreciation to the Government of those three countries for their cooperation and for facilitating the visit.

I should like also to take this opportunity to convey my personal thanks to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Maman Sidikou and his team in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), which provided invaluable assistance during the visit.

A number of themes resonated during the course of the visit and the several meetings I had with Government interlocutors and representatives of civil society and the diplomatic community. They included the growing tension over the uncertainty in the electoral cycle, the security situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and measures to counter the illicit trade in natural resources. During my trip to Beni and Erengeti, I was able to hear first-hand the frustrations of the population over the persistence of violence and the continued suffering inflicted upon them by the armed groups.

As I approach the end of my first year as the Chair of this regime, I am of the view that the sanctions regime remains vital to addressing the critical issue that the Democratic Republic of the Congo faces. In this connection, the Committee is continuing to work to enhance the effectiveness of the sanctions regime by focusing on, among other things, improving cooperation with regional States and the effective implementation of the sanctions measures. I therefore paid attention to promoting a better understanding of the work of the sanctions Committee during my visit

to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to the region, and I encourage interlocutors to raise issues of concern that could be relayed to the Committee in New York.

The key point that I would like to raise here today is that the regime was established to work with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to promote peace in the country. Towards this end, I encourage officials to cooperate with the Group of Experts by facilitating their visits and providing information as appropriate and welcome a continued dialogue with Government officials, as well as express the hope that the visit will serve to further facilitate and strengthen cooperation.

Following my visit, I capitalized on the momentum back here in New York by following up informally with the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. Yesterday, 10 October, the Committee also met with those States and other States of the region during formal consultations to continue our reflection on how to improve the implementation of the measures and enhance collaboration. I should like to stress that these questions require thoughtful consideration by the Committee and a renewed engagement with the States of the region, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the sanctions regime and its contribution to the stabilization effort.

I am also aware of the fact that key challenges continue to impede the achievement of peace in the successful implementation of the sanctions regime. Armed groups, in particular the Allied Democratic Forces, remain a major threat to peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda, while causing significant disruption to border communities, is reportedly more fragmented and weakened. However, it remains critical to continue working to limit the capacity of these armed groups to pose a threat not only to the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo but also to the region. I would like to seize this opportunity to acknowledge the new momentum in the cooperation among the countries of the region in this regard.

Another issue of key concern remains the illicit exploitation of natural resources. The potential for armed groups to benefit from illicit exploitation and smuggling remains great, and criminal networks inside and outside the Democratic Republic of the Congo indirectly support armed groups and contribute to the instability. As Chair, I will continue to focus on these matters and encourage the Group of Experts and the Committee to remain vigilant, including by discussing means to help country address this matter.

Lastly, the rising political tension in the country has the potential to further exacerbate the security situation and undermine the hard-fought gains made in stabilizing the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In conclusion, I should like to note that in addition to our focus on humanitarian concerns and the related attacks by armed groups, the illicit exploitation of natural resources and cooperation with regional States, the Committee has also continued to engage with the Group of Experts towards the regular and timely submission of reports concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I therefore stress the fact that support for the work of the Group remains critical for the implementation of the sanctions regime.

Furthermore, and in ensuring regular discussion and information-sharing with the relevant actors, the Secretariat has contacted the Office of the Special Representatives on Sexual Violence in Conflict and for Children in Armed Conflict for additional information-sharing with the Committee on humanitarian-related issues pertaining to their respective mandates. I intend to invite both Special Representatives to provide briefings to the Committee in the context of informal consultations.

Finally, as mandated by the Security Council, the Group of Experts will be presenting its mid-term report to the Committee during the month of December. Following the Group's presentation and after the publication of the report, I also intend to invite the States of the region to present to the Committee their views on the report. This will further continue to enhance our engagement and cooperation with those States.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ambassador Aboulatta for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Maman Sidikou, for having introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the

situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2016/833).

I should like also to thank Mr. Sidikou's entire team, as well as the personnel of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), for the work that they have been doing in the country. I should like also to thank the Permanent Representative of Egypt, Mr. Amr Aboulatta, for his introduction in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I should like to reiterate Uruguay's commitment to the stability and the establishment of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, not only as an elected member of the Security Council, but also as a country contributing troops to MONUSCO, which we have been doing without interruption for the past 16 years.

Uruguay is deeply concerned about the stalled electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is increasing political tensions and generating numerous incidents. There is a pressing need to unblock that situation, and the only way to do so is through inclusive, good-faith and transparent dialogue among all national political actors. Political actors, which should act in the interests of the country and its inhabitants, have an enormous responsibility of garnering the necessary consensus to hold credible elections without undue delays, if they are to avoid an escalation of tension and violence. Similarly, we once again call upon the political groups that have not yet joined to dialogue process to do so and to play a constructive role that will contribute to the timely holding of credible elections.

We are also concerned about reports on increases in civil and political rights abuses, including violations of the freedom speech and assembly, committed even by Government linked forces or personnel. In that regard, it must be clear that sooner or later those responsible should be brought to justice and held accountable for their actions.

Finally, Uruguay regrets every civilian death over the past few months, including those that occurred during the Kinshasa protests on 19 September and those in Beni in the month of August, allegedly carried out by armed groups.

Mr. Suárez Moreno (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We agree with the representative of Uruguay on the issue of making the discussions in the Security Council more transparent to the broader membership, and that is why we have asked for the floor today.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is grateful for the briefing of Mr. Maman Sambo Sidikou, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), to whom we pay tribute. We also commend him for his excellent work as an intermediary and for supporting the efforts carried out by the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to bolster national security and stability.

We also take this opportunity to thank the Ambassador of Egypt for his briefing.

We are closely following the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We welcome the national dialogue that started in September, launched by the initiative of Joseph Kabila's Government, with the main political stakeholders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That dialogue, in the context of the current political, economic and security reality in that country, should aim to establish a road map that, in consideration of costitutional provisions, will enable consensus to break the deadlock with regard to the upcoming electoral process.

In that regard, we regret that the increase in political tensions has led to violent protests in recent weeks by opposition members attempting to boycott the national dialogue initiative. To that end, we urge all the country's political actors to abstain from acting in a way that could promote violence. In that connection, we believe that an ongoing, inclusive, constructive dialogue is the only way to jump-start the stalled electoral process.

The Security Council should send a message of solidarity to the Support Group for the Facilitation of the National Dialogue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, led by the African Union-appointed Facilitator and former Prime Minister of Togo, Mr. Edem Kodjo, who has the support of the Group, made up of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Southern African Development Community, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie and the United Nations.

We believe that the facilitation of political dialogue is essential to maintaining and consolidating governance an stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As such, it should enjoy the backing of the international community, as it relates to the sovereignty and political independence of that country. In that regard, we welcome the fact that MONUSCO continues to provide technical and logistical support to the Independent National Electoral commission in reviewing and updating the voter rolls and in encouraging financial contributions to the United Nations Development Programme Administrative Fund to facilitate the election cycle in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We reiterate our concern about the violence sparked by rebel groups, both Congolese and foreign, that operate in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which exacerbates the humanitarian situation in the east of the country. Such actions have contributed to the increase in the number of internally displaced persons, clashes between communities and a heightened lack of security.

We value the ongoing work of MONUSCO in supporting the the implementation of the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, as well as on the repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of ex-combattants. In that regard, the measures enacted over the past decade by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and better financing for national social assistance programmes to help ex-combattants during their reintegration are essential to promoting disarmament, the protection of civilians and human rights.

Finally, we are convinced that the consolidation of the presence and authority of the Congolese State, together with renewed trust in the framework of strategic dialogue with MONUSCO, continue to be vital elements to overcoming armed violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that process, the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be ensured, in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Gata Mavita wa Lufuta (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate, Sir, on the Russian Federation's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October and to convey my delegation's high esteem for the skilled steering of our deliberations since the beginning of the mon.h. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey my appreciation to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Gerard Van Bohemen, Permanent Representative of New Zealand, for the manner in which he presided over the work of the Council in September. Finally, I would like pay heartfelt tribute once again to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who has made enormous efforts and sacrifices throughout his mandate to bring peace and security to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to the Great Lakes region in Africa.

My delegation has very closely followed the final report (see S/2016/466) of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/833) on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which were touched on in the brifings by Mr. Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta, President of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Mr. Maman Sambo Sidikou, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While we welcome the successes set forth in both reports, allow me to mention several points that require clarification from us. Primarily, they relate to events that occurred on 19 and 20 September in Kinshasa, the electoral process and the national political dialogue under way — and, more broadly, the security in the east of my country.

As the Council has monitored, a faction of the opposition that does not participate in the national political dialogue under way in my country decided to organize a peaceful march in Kinshasa on 19 September to protest the holding of elections and to submit a petition to that effect to the Independent National Electoral Commission at its headquarters. After having requested authorization and in accordance with the law on meetings and demonstrations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the itinerary to be followed and starting time of the demonstration were agreed with the Governor of the city of Kinshasa, who authorized its organization.

While, according to organizers, the march was supposed to begin at noon, it was noted that in the very early morning and the evening before, in certain sections of the city, barricades were raised and tires burned along

several thoroughfares that were not supposed to be part of the demonstration's itinerary. Moreover, calls to loot and pillage the houses belonging to politicians of both the majority and the opposition, who were participating in the dialogue, were launched on social networks by supporters of the march's organizers.

The municipal authorities' efforts to reach out to the organizers and ask them to calm the demonstrators were in vain. Against that backdrop, the situation degenerated and the march become a genuine insurrection. Demonstrators armed with stones attacked the police. They targeted a 12-year-old girl in uniform on her way to school, raping and then killing her. They burned alive a policeman stationed outside a political party's headquarters after stripping him of his weapon, and then proceeded to kill three other policemen who were trying to restore order.

The demonstrators subsequently looted private and public property, maliciously destroyed schools and gas stations, set ablaze the headquarters of the political parties of the majority and the opposition taking part in the national dialogue, and set fire to police stations and the district court of Matete. The violence continued on 20 September with the destruction and burning of other property, including the headquarters of opposition parties not participating in the national dialogue.

The situation was finally brought under control thanks to the efforts of the police who managed to disperse the demonstrators using tear gas and not by firing live ammunition, as stated in the Secretary-General's report. Those events led to the deaths of 32 people, including four policemen. More than a 100 perpetrators of criminal acts during the demonstrations were arrested. They were apprehended in the act, and approximately 100 of them were sentenced to terms ranging from 45 days to 25 years in prison. Approximately 30 were acquitted.

With regard to the national political dialogue, it seems important to reaffirm to the Council that the dialogue process was initiated by the President of the Republic to allow all active forces of the country, including a variety of politicians and actors from civil society and religious and traditional authorities, to agree on the means to overcome the obstacles standing in the way of peaceful elections and establishing a consensus in connection with the ongoing process. In that regard, my Government wishes to see all actors participate in the dialogue. Unfortunately, a fringe group of the opposition, united under what is known as the Rassemblement des forces politiques et sociales acquises au changement is boycotting the dialogue, which at one time was supported by some of the political parties within the Rassemblement.

For its part, my Government has responded favourably to a number of demands made by the opposition in order to defuse political tensions and promote broad inclusiveness in the dialogue. Those demands were mainly focused on the appointment of an international Facilitator and an international support group for the Facilitator, as well as the release of so-called political prisoners and the reopening of media outlets belonging to the opposition. In addition to the Government's efforts, the Facilitator has also striven to establish contacts with all the constructive forces within and outside the country to achieve this inclusiveness.

The segment of the opposition that rejects dialogue and makes ever-new demands, undoubtedly to more effectively delay the process, went so far as to reject the Facilitator, demanding that the African Union appoint another one. With the help of the international support group — comprising the Special Envoy and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and representatives of the European Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the International Organization of la Francophonie, and the Southern African Development Community — the Facilitator has been working on the dialogue since 1 September. Although the work of the dialogue remains unfinished, it would truly be in bad faith not to acknowledge the largely positive results that have been recorded thus far. Indeed, the participants in the dialogue have agreed on a number of points, in particular the electoral register.

Having considered the reports of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the International Organization of la Francophonie and the Independent National Electoral Commission, the participants agreed to draw up a completely new register to ensure the holding of credible elections and to avoid the challenging of results. The update of the register will take 16 months and end in July 2017. Meanwhile, the voter registration process has already begun in Gbadolite, North Ubangi province.

With regard to the sequence of elections, the participants in the dialogue agreed to combine the presidential, national legislative and provincial elections so that they could be organized on the the same date,

while municipal and local elections will be able to take place later. In terms of the transition, in accordance with article 70 of the Constitution, they agreed that the current Head of State should remain in office until his successor assumes his functions and a Government of broad national unity, composed of representatives of the majority, the political opposition and civil society, is set up to allow for the collegial and transparent governance of the transition. They also agreed that no members of this Government would be able to run as a candidate in the presidential election.

With regard to the electoral calendar, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General just mentioned, a draft electoral calendar was proposed by the National Independent Electoral Commission. The participants will discuss that in order to agree on the date for the presidential election combined with the national legislative and provincial elections.

On the issue of the political agreement, at the end of the dialogue the parties agreed to sign an agreement that will reprise all the points on which they will have agreed, along with the dates of the elections.

Some countries criticize the Government of my country for not having called for elections on 19 September and demand a broadening of political dialogue and other confidence-building measures, such as the release of other political prisoners and the inclusion of certain figures, whose presence they have judged important in the dialogue. My delegation recalls that the dialogue concerns first and foremost the Congolese people who, through international facilitation, are debating, in the context of their country's best interest, issues on the agenda and on which they have previously agreed in order to allow for the electoral process — as we have always stressed — to take place in a peaceful environment. Partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, wishing to contribute to finding solutions to the situation in my country, are called upon to do so with the consideration and respect that we owe each other. Everyone can agree that although, in this context, recommendations or suggestions are welcome, neither invective nor demands of any kind are acceptable.

To return to the point of not having called for the holding of elections, the Council will recall the explanation provided here by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of my country, as well as by me, on the topic of the opposition, which once rejected the partial electoral calendar and rejected the comprehensive electoral calendar twice. It will also recall the electoral register that was not updated after the 2006 elections and the need — following the audit of the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Group of Experts and the Independent National Electoral Commission — to update it to include those Congolese who had recently reached voting age and those who were abroad. The Independent National Electoral Commission therefore could not convene elections with a non-existant electoral register.

Finally, with regard to broadening the dialogue, I must once again recall that it is intended to be inclusive, in accordance with the decree of our Head of State. It is with this mind, as we have said, that the Government has responded favourably to several demands of the opposition. It is also to that end that the facilitator has reached out broadly to convince all political actors in the country from all political leanings to engage in dialogue. Only those political actors of the opposition who are absent from today's dialogue freely chose not to participate in it; it was not the Facilitator who excluded them, much less my Government, which from the outset of the dialogue requested the support of the Council by way of a letter from our Permanent Mission in September.

In another confidence-building measure, my Government has amply demonstrated its good faith by taking appropriate steps, as I have already mentioned, with a view to easing the situation. While there may be political actors who are prosecuted for reasons other than political ones, the rule of law requires all citizens of the country to enjoy equal rights before the law. It would be wrong for the Government to intervene in the interest of certain people in purely private affairs, pitting individuals against each other.

As the Council is surely aware and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has noted, that opposition group — in reaction to the dialogue being held with the support of the international community — held a closed meeting during which it adopted positions that are in breach of the Constitution. The opposition's threats to wreak havoc and call for an uprising and violence must be condemned unequivocally. We called the attention of the Council on 23 June (see S/PV.7724) with the intention of forewarning it of the situation when we stated that the Council is the United Nations organ responsible for maintaining international peace and security. It has the weighty responsibility to work towards peace and prevent the outbreak of all conflict.

Thus, any discourse emerging from the Council that does not promote an atmosphere of trust or that aggravates tensions could have very serious consequences on the ground for Member States.

As we said yesterday, the tensions in my country today are in part due to resolution 2277 (2016), the provisions of which have been interpreted in various manners. Given the way the situation has evolved in my country, what we expect from the international community in general and the Security Council in particular, as the Representatives of Uruguay and Venezuela have just said, is its continued support to the facilitator and the political agreement resulting from the dialogue under way.

We welcome the resumption of cooperation between the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). We hope that such cooperation will produce rapid results in order to allow the people in the east of our country to live in peace and freely go about their daily lives. That is why my Government prioritizes the joint mission that has been tasked to FARDC and MONUSCO to neutralize all armed groups in the country by December.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2016/833) also notes the presence of several hundred armed groups and a number of civilians from South Sudan in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country met on this issue with the leaders of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations during his trip to New York. My delegation maintains the position held by the Head of the Congolese diplomatic corps on that occasion. The United Nations knows the precise conditions under which these people arrived in our country. The Democratic Republic of the Congo does not intend on reliving the its past experiences with the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda. We therefore believe that the United Nations will take all necessary measures to relocate the South Sudanese nationals.

We cannot reiterate often enough the fact that the people of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo have known no peace peace and for several years have lived under the reule of foreign and national armed groups. The humanitarian disaster resulting from this situation should drive us to find immediate solutions so that the people of the Great Lakes region of Africa can live at home and in peace, and enjoy Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that context, my country thanks the Governments of the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom for financing the Peacebuilding Fund, which has allowed us to implement plans and strategies to stabilize the provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I cannot conclude without extending my Government's gratitude to the United Nations, and especially to the Special Representative of Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their commitment and devotion to the cause of my country and the Great Lakes region. I also express my country's thanks and gratitude to all members of the Council.

The President: I now invite members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7789

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7789th meeting
Tuesday, 11 October 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Iliichev	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2016/753)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2016/753)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Haiti, Mexico and Peru to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, to participate in this meeting.

Ms. Honoré is joining us via video-teleconference from Port-au-Prince.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Her Excellency Ms. Joanne Adamson, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/753, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

I now give the floor to Ms. Honoré.

Ms. Honoré: I would like to express my gratitude to the Russian Federation, in its capacity as President of the Security Council, for convening today's meeting on Haiti and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

(*spoke in French*)

I take this opportunity also to welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Haiti.

(*spoke in English*)

We are in solidarity, together with the people and the Government of Haiti, as the country again faces loss of life and destruction caused by natural disaster. I am deeply saddened by the deaths and the suffering among Haitian families and the overall physical toll on the country inflicted by Hurricane Matthew.

(*spoke in French*)

Before briefing the Council on the impact of Hurricane Matthew and the immediate measures already taken by the United Nations in Haiti, I should like to convey my deepest condolences to the people and the Government of Haiti.

(*spoke in English*)

The category 4 hurricane made landfall on 4 October in south-western Haiti, causing death, widespread damage, flooding and displacement, resulting in the largest humanitarian crisis in Haiti since the 2010 earthquake. The Government of Haiti estimates that more than 2.1 million persons have been affected, with more than 1.4 million in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. The Ministry of the Interior has confirmed 372 deaths — a figure that is likely to rise — while more than 60,000 people have been evacuated and remain in temporary shelters.

Hurricane Matthew impacted the entire south of the country, with the departments of Grande Anse, Nippes, Sud and Sud-Est bearing the brunt of the destruction. In the affected area, where small-scale farming is the main source of income, the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people have been lost as up to 80 per cent of crops and livestock vanished. The hurricane inflicted major damage on Haiti's public infrastructure, washing away roads and bridges, blowing away tin roofs, flooding schools — many identified to serve as voting centres — and leaving whole towns submerged and inaccessible for several days. A critical bridge connecting the southern peninsula to the capital, Port-au-Prince, collapsed, cutting off essential supply lines and disrupting commercial food supply chains, which has further impeded access to the affected areas, which also lost telephone communication.

Although the Government is still assessing the full extent of the physical damage, as access to the affected areas is gradually expanded, there can be no doubt that this is a humanitarian tragedy and an acute emergency situation, with 1.4 million persons in need of immediate

assistance from the Haitian Government, with support from its international partners. During two visits to the southern peninsula, I myself witnessed how desperately that assistance is needed. And it is needed quickly, as health conditions deteriorate and basic supplies are running out.

The health impact of this disaster cannot be overestimated. Water and sanitation infrastructure, already fragile, have been severely damaged. The absence of drinking water and the contamination by sewage of other water sources is causing a very high level of infections from diarrhoeal disease, including, but not exclusively, cholera. In response, we are providing water-purification systems and medicine to hard-to-reach areas. There are hundreds of suspected cholera cases, and we are already seeing the first deaths. Protecting vulnerable populations from cholera and ensuring that the restoration and, in some cases, the installation of water and sanitation systems has to be one of the priorities for humanitarian action.

To address those needs and to provide other life-saving assistance to 750,000 persons for the next three months, the United Nations and humanitarian agencies yesterday launched a flash appeal for $120 million. I express my sincere thanks to all countries for the prompt support they have provided and continue to provide, and I call on all Member States to contribute urgently to the appeal, in support of the response being led by the Government of Haiti. In that context, I wish to commend the Government for the leadership that it has so far demonstrated in setting the priorities and coordinating the immediate response. I encourage all partners to align with that leadership and further strengthen the capacities of the Civil Protection Directorate and the ministries concerned. Dealing with recovery and reconstruction in the aftermath of the hurricane will require, more than ever, a coordinated approach behind an agenda defined by the Government.

The United Nations, along with other governmental and non-governmental and international and local partners, started supporting the Haitian authorities in addressing the immediate needs of the affected population in shelter, water, sanitation and food assistance during this emergency response phase, and even before, by pre-positioning stocks of life-saving food and non-food items. MINUSTAH civilian and uniformed personnel and capacities are being put to full use in support of the humanitarian efforts — by opening up access to roads, providing airlift and supporting the Haitian National Police (HNP) in securing humanitarian workers and stocks, among other tasks.

Not only did Hurricane Matthew bring destruction to Haiti, it has also affected the country's political outlook, rendering impossible the holding on 9 October of the presidential elections, repeated from last year, as well as the partial senatorial elections and legislative re-runs. That is despite the resolve shown by the Haitian Government, the Provisional Electoral Council and the Haitian National Police in preparing for the elections and working to create a conducive environment.

In the light of the considerable humanitarian challenges and the damage to critical infrastructure caused by the hurricane, the Provisional Electoral Council postponed the elections pending the completion of an assessment of the impact of the hurricane on the electoral process, including of the Provisional Electoral Council's capacities in the departments. Preliminary reports by the Council indicate that at least 70 per cent of voting centres may have been affected in Sud department, and even more in Grand'Anse, where many areas are still inaccessible.

Prior to the disruption caused by the hurricane, technical preparations had largely been on track for the holding of the elections. Most political actors were committed to renewing the country's key democratic institutions through elections as a crucial first step towards Haiti's return to constitutional order following the extended period of transitional governance. No political party boycotted the process, and the large number of registered candidates and parties reflected broad participation by actors across the political spectrum, setting the stage for an inclusive electoral process.

(*spoke in French*)

The commitment shown by the Haitian authorities with regard to ownership of all aspects of the electoral process, including financial and operational aspects, is promising, especially in the context of the eventual drawdown of MINUSTAH. While the Provisional Electoral Council is preparing to announce a new electoral calendar, it is important to find the right balance to maintain the momentum generated for elections and to take into account the technical and political considerations, while facing the largest humanitarian crisis that Haiti has known since 2010.

(*spoke in English*)

In the light of the simultaneous challenges of addressing the impact of the hurricane and preparing for the holding of the much-anticipated elections, the Provisional Electoral Council and the Haitian National Police will need vigorous support from the Government and its international partners to build on the pre-hurricane preparations and to ensure the credibility and the integrity of the process. Furthermore, now more than ever, all the necessary measures must be taken to ensure that the political process is managed in a manner that generates the consensus needed among the national actors to overcome the political and humanitarian challenges facing the country. I therefore call on all national actors to place the needs of the Haitian people above all and unite behind this goal, including with a view to preserving the relative stability that marked the security situation prior to the passing of Hurricane Matthew and throughout the electoral campaign. In that context, I condemn the random attacks on vehicles transporting food and other life-saving supplies, and I urge the country's authorities to take the necessary measures to prevent such attacks from happening.

Despite the imperative need for all actors, including MINUSTAH, to focus on the emergency response, we cannot lose sight of the longer-term challenges and priorities. In addition to facilitating and supporting a coordinated Government-led recovery and reconstruction agenda, no effort can be spared to continue strengthening the rule-of-law institutions, most notably the Haitian National Police. Despite progress in both strength and performance since my previous briefing, the Haitian National Police is yet to become operationally independent and continues to require support from both the Government of Haiti and international partners to fully provide for security throughout the country.

Less than three months before the end of the 2012-2016 HNP development plan, work on the HNP strategic plan for the period 2017-2021 is reaching its final stages, including determining objectives with respect to the required police-to-population ratio and identifying areas in which continuous specialized support is needed for further institutional and operational improvement of the Haitian National Police. The new five-year strategy will also provide an additional impetus for MINUSTAH's security transitioning planning, thereby informing the strategic assessment that is expected to be conducted prior to the expiration of the Mission's mandate.

The impact of Hurricane Matthew on the political process and on stability in the country can only serve to reconfirm the recommendation of the Secretary-General for a six-month extension, at the current force and police strength, until 15 April 2017. That will allow MINUSTAH to support the Haitian authorities in their efforts to return to full constitutional order in the wake of the humanitarian crisis created by Hurricane Matthew.

I thank all my colleagues in MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team for their dedication and commitment during this challenging period for Haiti, and express my sincere respect to all the humanitarian and civil protection workers, who are making tireless efforts under severe conditions. I call on all of Haiti's international partners to continue to lend their support to the country in order to rapidly overcome the new challenges occasioned by the hurricane so that everyone can refocus on strengthening the country's economic, physical and institutional infrastructure.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Honoré for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): We thank Special Representative Honoré for her briefing today. First and foremost, I want to convey our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti for the devastation and loss of life that Hurricane Matthew inflicted last week. Against that backdrop, I am going to speak today about both the importance of disaster relief efforts, including what the United States is doing to help, and the political situation in Haiti, while recognizing that the storm does not change the fact that we are at a critical moment in Haiti's political life and for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

When Hurricane Matthew swept through Haiti and the region last week, it claimed hundreds of lives, levelled homes and businesses and dealt a severe blow to the country's infrastructure and agriculture, especially on the southern coast. The images coming from Haiti are simply searing and heartbreaking. We, the international community, must do all that we can to help Haiti at this time. To our Haitian brothers and

sisters, please know that the people of the United States of America stand with them. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with support from the Department of Defence, as well as other key United States partners, including the Centers for Disease Control, is leading our response. Through USAID, we have so far made available $1.3 million in humanitarian assistance for communities in Haiti affected by the hurricane. As of 11 October, our Department of Defence-led task force has delivered more than 186,000 pounds of relief commodities, aid and supplies to areas devastated by Hurricane Matthew. We know that much more remains to be done as the full extent of Hurricane Matthew's damage becomes known. But in the immediate term, yesterday, the United Nations, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General just mentioned, issued a flash appeal calling for an additional $120 million to meet immediate lifesaving needs. Haiti needs assistance as soon as possible, and it is incumbent upon all of us to step up and contribute.

The fresh humanitarian challenges facing Haiti are grave and can be met only by fully functioning institutions. That is why, even with the devastation brought about by the hurricane, we strongly urge the Government of Haiti to continue to move towards holding elections as soon as possible. The Haitian people need elected representatives at all levels of Government who can address the aftermath of the crisis and start promoting policies that will build a strong and prosperous Haiti. That means improving the business and investment climate and building a model for economic growth. It means fighting corruption and helping to create an independent and transparent judicial system so that all feel that they will get fair treatment under the law.

As damaging as the hurricane was, we must not allow it to undo the impressive gains that the Haitian Government and the electoral officials have made towards the elections. The decision of Haitian officials to repeat the first round of presidential elections has presented Haiti with an opportunity to improve on the 2015 process. While the United States did not believe that a repeat was warranted, we are encouraged by steps that Haiti's electoral authority has taken to address the shortcomings identified in the previous elections, including requiring all participants to identify their voting location in advance of election day. We therefore look forward to the final round of elections on 8 January 2017 and to welcoming the seating of a new President on 7 February 2017. We call on the Government of Haiti at all levels to remain politically neutral throughout the electoral process and not support any one candidate or party. And we call on all actors, especially candidates and political parties, to engage peacefully in the political process.

The United States Government is among the donors providing funding for an international observer mission from the Organization of American States and local Haitian observers in an effort to strengthen transparency and bolster voter confidence. We strongly urge all Haitians to go to the polls and exercise their right to choose Haiti's next leader, confident that the outcome will reflect their voice.

Turning to the future of MINUSTAH, we look forward to a strategic assessment mission to be deployed during this mandate period, which will make recommendations on the possible withdrawal of MINUSTAH and on a future presence and role of the United Nations in Haiti in a manner that is fit for purpose.

We welcome the Secretary-General's new efforts to better address cholera in Haiti for both treatment and prevention and to develop a proposal on material assistance and support to those most directly affected by the awful cholera epidemic. We look forward to hearing more details about that new approach, and welcome collaboration between the United Nations and Haiti, with the support of the Member States, to devise an appropriate response to the crisis.

As always, we thank the men and women of MINUSTAH, the troop and police contributors and the Group of Friends for Haiti for their tireless efforts to promote stabilization and development, especially at this critical time.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming the close ties between the United States of America and Haiti. We are not only neighbours, but also partners and friends. The United States looks forward to deepening that partnership further by working together with an elected Haitian President who can address key issues, such as electoral and judicial reform, anti-corruption efforts and economic growth. We are eager to work together with that new President in our shared goal of ensuring that the future will be strong and bright and benefit the people of Haiti.

Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine): I would like to thank Special Representative Honoré for her useful briefing.

While Ukraine aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union, I would like to make a few comments in my national capacity.

Unfortunately, as we deliberate in this Chamber, Haiti is suffering the consequences of the devastating hurricane. In that regard, I would like to convey our sincere condolences to the people of Haiti on the loss of hundreds of lives and the destruction of thousands of homes. Ukraine stands in solidarity with this nation in the face of such a challenge. Yet even before the latest natural disaster struck Haiti, it was going through a critical humanitarian and socioeconomic situation.

According to the latest report (S/2016/753) of the Secretary-General report, an estimated 3.6 million people, or one third of Haiti's population, face food insecurity after three years of severe drought. Over 61,000 individuals remain internally displaced since the 2010 earthquake. It is during such natural disasters as Hurricane Matthew and the 2010 earthquake that the weakness of Haiti's State governance becomes most visible. On numerous occasions, the Security Council appealed to the political parties in Haiti to urgently resolve the political deadlock. A lack of progress on this track and the inability of players to reach compromises and to adopt long-overdue decisions keep the country's State machinery on the perpetual verge of collapse. The people of Haiti deserve better than that.

After a long period of political uncertainty and delay, the country was getting ready for elections last Sunday. Yet those plans were disrupted by the hurricane. In that context, we hope that a new electoral calendar will be announced soon. Ukraine reaffirms its support for credible, transparent, inclusive and secure elections that will reflect the will of the Haitian people. The international community needs the Government of Haiti as a reliable partner in advancing development, democracy, human rights and other vital objectives.

Ukraine welcomes the Secretary-General's recommendations concerning the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). We support the idea of extending it for six months until 15 April 2017, and of deploying a strategic assessment mission by the end of that period. We share the opinion that it would be preferable to conduct the strategic assessment mission after a President has been elected and inaugurated. However, considering the troubling trends in the country's political development, we do not think the assessment mission should be contingent on the inauguration timetable.

Ukraine commends the important role that MINUSTAH continues to play in ensuring stability and security in Haiti. Its contribution to strengthening the capacity of the Haitian National Police is particularly important. It is encouraging that we have seen some progress in that area, but according to the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/753), the police are currently present in only 261 of the country's 570 communal sections. It will therefore be extremely important to try to achieve the goal of 15,000 fully operational serving police officers by the end of 2017.

Finally, we would like to underline the necessity of ensuring that the United Nations, other multilateral agencies, international and regional partners and Member States continue their efforts to support Haiti's critical needs, and in that regard to highlight the flash appeal launched by the United Nations yesterday.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I am grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for her briefing.

Our thoughts are with the people of Haiti and the region affected by Hurricane Matthew. Along with many partners in Haiti, the United Kingdom is working to establish the extent of the damage and the most pressing humanitarian needs. We are stepping up to support those affected. We have already sent experts and relief suppliers to the region and have allocated £5 million to Haiti. We would like to express our solidarity with those hit by the devastating hurricane. The people of Haiti are unfortunately no strangers to the destructive effects of natural disasters. They have shown their resilience as a country time and again, and I hope that the months and years ahead will see homes rebuilt and livelihoods restored.

Democracy is an essential part of Haiti's path forward, but speedy elections cannot come at the expense of those who desperately need to rebuild. As a result of the hurricane, the decision to postpone the elections is unfortunate but understandable in the highly unusual circumstances. Considering the loss of life, displacement of people and significant disruption of infrastructure, we support the decision, which will ensure that the authorities can focus fully on the recovery effort. We urge the Haitian authorities to ensure that as soon as it is feasible for voters in all

parts of the country to be able to participate they move towards rescheduling the elections.

The recent events highlight the continued relevance of the full range of the work of the United Nations in Haiti, and the importance of deciding the role that we the Council should play in it. I join the Secretary-General in thanking everyone involved in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations country team for their ongoing commitment to Haiti. With hundreds of lives lost and images of yet another round of devastation dealt to Haiti, it would be easy to lose sight of the achievements that the country has made in recent years. The security situation, although fragile, remains stable, and the performance of the Haitian National Police continues to improve. We must now ensure that progress is consolidated and continues to evolve. Getting the Haitian National Police to a stage where they can stand on their own feet, without assistance, is paramount.

Haiti is at a turning point on the path towards the consolidation of stability and democracy, and although significant challenges remain, we must ensure that the presence and future role of the United Nations in Haiti is adapted to best suit the conditions there. Recent events have demonstrated Haiti's vulnerability to natural disasters and the fragility of gains. Its significant needs are clear — long-term development assistance, resilient infrastructure, support in establishing durable and diverse livelihoods and ongoing backing for the creation of a professional and effective police force.

The United Kingdom stands ready to help on those fronts, but we do not believe that a peacekeeping mission is the best vehicle any longer for responding to those needs. We therefore look forward to the results of the forthcoming strategic assessment mission, and welcome the continuing preparatory work on a joint transition plan aimed at consolidating Haiti's success. We must ensure that the Mission quickly hands over responsibilities where other actors on the ground, including the United Nations country team, have a comparative advantage in conducting them.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): I would like to express my gratitude to Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for her thorough briefing. Japan commends the Special Representative and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for their continued support to Haiti's reconstruction, stability and security, including the institutional improvements that will make Haiti more resilient over the long term.

I would like to take a moment to mention the devastation caused by Hurricane Matthew. Japan would like to express its deep sorrow and affirm its continued solidarity with the Haitian people, and we thank MINUSTAH and donor countries and institutions for their important emergency support. Japan is also joining the humanitarian effort by supplying emergency relief goods and providing support via the Japanese food assistance programme.

In the light of the severe damage caused by the hurricane, we understand that postponing the elections scheduled for 9 October was unavoidable. We look forward to the announcement of a new electoral calendar by 12 October. Much progress was made on electoral preparations prior to the hurricane, and we have high hopes for a fair, transparent and smooth election once the situation subsides. Let me be direct — public and international trust depends on it.

Beyond the disaster response, the fruits of MINUSTAH's efforts are visible across Haitian society today. We see them in the Special Representative's use of her good offices in support of elections and the restoration of constitutional order. We see them in community violence reduction programmes, improved criminal justice procedure and the response to criminal gangs. And we see them in security-sector support to the Haitian National Police on patrols, the rule of law, community policing and the development of the 2017-2021 strategic plan. We are pleased that the Haitian National Police's capacity has been enhanced and believe that a professional and nationally owned security sector will enable Haiti to better stand on its own. In that regard, we look forward to recommendations from the Secretary-General on the future of the United Nations role in Haiti, based on a strategic assessment over the course of the six-month extension of MINUSTAH's mandate.

I would also like to touch on the issue of cholera, which has plagued Haiti for too long and is likely to worsen, owing to the hurricane. We believe that in the long term, the best measures for fighting maladies such as cholera are poverty reduction and improved infrastructure, with a focus on water, sanitation and hygiene. Japan has been supporting Haiti's reconstruction, especially improving cholera prevention

via international institutions, and will continue to make the greatest possible effort in that regard.

Over the long term, our partnership with Haiti is based on national ownership of State-building processes, including elections. The hurricane has brought new challenges, but we are confident that the Haitian people will overcome them. Ultimately, nationally led development and strengthened institutions will enable the country to weather any storm. Japan will be there to help along the way.

Mrs. Adnin (Malaysia): I wish to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré for her comprehensive briefing. I join Council members in expressing my deepest condolences and in conveying my heartfelt sympathy on behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia to the Government and people of Haiti in the tragic aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. Our thoughts and prayers and solidarity are with the people of Haiti during this difficult time.

The onset of Hurricane Matthew has undoubtedly dealt a severe blow to the ongoing national and international efforts in support of Haiti's political security transition and socioeconomic development to say the least. Even so, we take to heart the courage and resilience demonstrated by the Haitian people in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake and we are convinced that they will be able to rise to the present challenges as well.

Malaysia remains committed to and will spare no effort in helping to galvanize and mobilize the necessary support, aid and assistance for Haiti. We take good note of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré's comprehensive and sobering briefing and wish to place on record our great appreciation to her and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the United Nations country team and other agencies on the ground for their unstinting efforts to address the immediate humanitarian needs of the population. In this connection, we welcome the launch of the flash aid appeal by the Secretary-General yesterday. It is critical that the request for assistance be met and that it be met soon.

I wish to also place on record Malaysia's appreciation to the Secretary-General for recognizing the United Nations contributory role to the spread of cholera in Haiti in the wake of the 2010 earthquake. More importantly, we commend the Secretary-General's recent announcement during the General Assembly's high-level week on a proposed new package of measures, including intensifying efforts to build some water sanitation and health systems.

To say that Hurricane Matthew has had a severe negative impact on Haiti and its people would be a gross understatement. The cost of rebuilding the civilian infrastructure, transport and communications network is immense. With regard to short-term and immediate assistance by United Nations actors and agencies, We are of the view that it would be helpful to quickly identify possible quick-impact projects with a view to stabilizing the socioeconomic situation of Haitians in light of the devastation of crops and food stocks towards ensuring food security for the most vulnerable segments of the population.

But for Hurricane Mathew, this past weekend would have seen Haitians going to the polls to elect a new president. As such, while we understand the need for postponement, we hope that any rescheduling of the presidential and legislative elections can take place as soon as possible. This is crucial to ensuring that Haiti can continue on the path towards full restoration and constitutional order. To this end, we call upon all Haitian political parties and players to cooperate with the interim Administration and the Provisional Electoral Council so that credible, smooth, transparent and inclusive elections could be held as soon as possible.

The results of the municipal level elections released last July set a good example, and we are pleased to note that in all 139 municipal councils, at least one in three members is a woman, in line with the constitutional provision of a 30 per cent quota for women in public positions. In this regard, we urge Special Representative Honoré to continue her good office's work in building consensus in paving the way forward for the presidential and legislative elections.

On a related note, we welcome the efforts towards a steady strengthening of rule of law institutions in Haiti, especially the strides made by the Haitian National Police (HNP). We are encouraged by the close cooperation and collaboration between HNP and MINUSTAH in terms of operational planning and training, as well as on joint operations and patrols in combatting crime, as well as election-related violence. No doubt, the current situation is extremely challenging for the interim administrations, including the security forces who are now faced with increased demands by the population. We hope that the safety, security and welfare of the

civilian population, especially of women and children, the disabled and the elderly will be prioritized. We welcome the ongoing implementation of the HNP's 2012-2016 strategic plan and note that the drafting of the 2017-2021 strategic plan has also commenced. We see these as crucial steps towards assessing needs and identifying areas to further strengthen the HNP so that it may fully assume its responsibilities, particularly after the drawdown or exit of MINUSTAH.

In this regard, we could support the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend MINUSTAH's mandate by six months. At the same time, we are of the view that the Secretariat could undertake initial preparatory work on the future presence and role of the United Nations in Haiti soon on the understanding that a full strategic assessment would take place after the inauguration of the new president.

In conclusion, I wish to once again express my delegation's utmost appreciation to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré, the entire MINUSTAH team, as well as the United Nations country team for their tirelessness and diligence in spearheading the international community's relief and assistance effort in Haiti. They have our utmost gratitude and respect.

Mr. Moustafa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to echo previous speakers by expressing my sincere condolences to the people and the Government of Haiti following Hurricane Matthew. I can assure Haiti of Egypt's support. I would like to thank Ms. Sandra Honoré for her comprehensive briefing and express our support for the efforts that she and her team are making in Haiti.

Haiti is at a turning point in its history. It is encountering enormous challenges in different areas, including the disastrous humanitarian situation and ongoing political, security and economic challenges. The joint support of the international community to Haiti is therefore absolutely vital now. Hurricane Matthew has provoked a dire humanitarian situation, as Ms. Honoré said a moment ago. Basic infrastructure has been destroyed, in particular infrastructure that the Haitian authorities were going to use as ballot stations. There is also a cholera epidemic and an acute food crisis. For that reason, I urge the international community to step up its efforts in supporting Haiti during this humanitarian crisis.

In the face of these challenges, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) — to which Egypt has contributed a police contingent — has played an important role in ensuring that humanitarian aid has reached the Haitian people. The Mission took part in the relief and rescue operations following the hurricane. Those efforts must continue so that Haiti does not again face a humanitarian crisis similar to that which followed the 2010 earthquake.

Before the MINUSTAH mandate is renewed, Egypt calls for the issue to be reviewed in an open-minded manner, given the current suffering of the Haitian people and the number of challenges that the country is facing. It is therefore necessary to undertake a strategic assessment of the United Nations presence in Haiti, while taking into account all current challenges and the way in which MINUSTAH is addressing them. It is vital that such an assessment include real solutions to address the underlying causes of the country's instability.

The country's political process, which should have led to presidential elections on 9 October, has been impacted by the hurricane. The Haitian authorities have found themselves obliged to postpone the elections, without fixing a new date for them, in the light of the fact that the hurricane destroyed numerous polling stations. The national authorities were counting on their own resources to conduct the elections, which clearly demonstrates their determination to establish political stability in the country. We are firmly convinced that the Haitian authorities understand the importance of the election taking place on the date set in order to avoid another political crisis that would impact the country's security, economy and society as a whole.

When the Council begins its consideration of extending the mandate of MINUSTAH, it should take account of the fact that, despite a relative drop in crime over recent months, the number of demonstrations and protests has been increasing since April, exposing the fragility of the security situation, particularly in the current humanitarian crisis. I must therefore congratulate MINUSTAH on its efforts. The Mission has indeed played a lead role in bolstering national institutions and in institutional capacity-building, particularly of the country's security and judicial institutions.

I appeal to Member States and all troop-contributing countries to continue to support the country's national

authorities and to step up efforts to finish building national security institutions. In that regard, we call for a genuine partnership with the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission in order to deliver comprehensive international aid to Haiti during the current transition phase, in which the country is seeking to move beyond its decades-long instability.

In conclusion, I would like to express our full support for the people and the Government of Haiti. We are convinced that they will succeed in overcoming this very delicate and complex period.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): We are grateful to Ms. Honoré for her briefing on the situation in Haiti and the activities of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). We welcome the Permanent Representative of Haiti to this meeting and through him, the Republic of Angola conveys its heartfelt condolences to the families of the Haitians killed by Hurricane Matthew, and to the Government of Haiti, which is confronted with a humanitarian crisis of catastrophic proportions at a time when Haiti is still struggling to recover from the 2010 earthquake. The images of disruption and overall destruction are indeed heartbreaking.

We deeply regret the consequences of this disaster, which has led to the postponement of the much-anticipated presidential, senatorial and legislative elections. We hope that new dates will be announced soon. The political gains that took place in the reporting period and that were subsequently washed away by Hurricane Matthew were possible thanks to the outstanding work of the country's Government, MINUSTAH the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which led a security and political assessment mission to Haiti and urged Haitian interlocutors to find solutions to the protracted crisis of Governance and to ensure the swift completion of the electoral process.

In spite of the reported situation of relative calm prior to the hurricane, the country's fragility, caused by prevailing political uncertainty, is a cause for concern. The increase in politically motivated violence has generated anxiety, prompting public protests that have resulted in the destruction of property and clashes with the police, worsening Haiti's fragile security situation. Robust joint security patrols and operations led by the Haitian National Police and MINUSTAH have resulted in a drop in criminal activities and stronger management of public protests by the National Police. We praise the ongoing partnership between MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police and other institutions tasked with ensuring the rule of law. Those are encouraging developments that we hope will secure an environment conducive to the holding of presidential elections.

We were encouraged by the fact that the Government of Haiti has fulfilled its commitment to providing the necessary funding for the elections and by the signing of the integrated security plan for the elections by the Director General of the Haitian National Police and MINUSTAH's Police Commissioner and Force Commander, in order to deploy a robust police and military force throughout the country to ensure security during the electoral period. The cooperation established between the Government of Haiti, MINUSTAH, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Office for Project Services and other international partners in support of the electoral process and in providing technical and logistical support, training electoral staff in vote tabulation, outreach campaigns and civic education will certainly positively impact the electoral process once it resumes.

We support the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend the mandate of MINUSTAH for a further six months with the current authorized personnel. The catastrophe that has struck Haiti will certainly change the Mission's future plans. We await the strategic assessment on the future work of MINUSTAH, hoping it will take into account that, if Haitians are to take full control of the destiny of their country, proper conditions must be effectively in place. Therefore, we urge all national actors to pursue the political and electoral process, engage decisively and with rigour in the country's reconstruction, and continue strengthening the rule of law by ensuring justice and respect for the human rights of all Haitians.

Finally, we commend the prompt response by MINUSTAH and the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team in evacuating a great number of vulnerable communities affected by Hurricane Matthew and in providing humanitarian assistance to those in need. It is our hope that once the current humanitarian crisis is overcome, Haiti will swiftly resume its electoral process, which was on track before Hurricane Matthew struck, that life starts normalizing for Haitian people and that sustainable peace is restored.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, for the timely convening of this debate on the situation in the Republic of Haiti. We commend the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/753), which was introduced by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Ms. Sandra Honoré. We welcome her and recognize the unflagging work being done by her, the men and women of the Mission and other humanitarian workers who tend tirelessly to the Haitian people every day to safeguard their security and stability.

We align ourselves with the statement to be made by the Ambassador of Peru on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates its commitment to the present and the future of the people of Haiti. Our countries are linked by historical, political and cultural links. We profoundly mourn the loss of human lives and the material losses due to Hurricane Matthew. We offer our condolences and solidarity with the brother nation of Haiti and its Government. In that regard, in the light of the state of emergency experienced by Haiti because of the damage caused by the natural disaster, and at the request of its Government, on 6 October my country initiated an airlift of humanitarian aid and a rapid-assistance team — bringing more than 600 tons of supplies, including food, clothes, drinking water, blankets, disposable materials and medical tents — to help the Haitian people affected by the hurricane.

We encourage the international community to continue and step up its cooperation with the Haitian people. We will continue to support our brother nation in the Caribbean in strengthening its democratic institutions. We lament the unfortunate coincidence that the hurricane took place just a few days before the Haitian people were to once again take part in the first round of presidential and partial legislative elections. Once they have overcome the effects of the Hurricane, the completion of the electoral process will be of particular importance.

In pursuing the objectives of establishing the political institutions of Haiti, it is absolutely vital that all political actors in the country engage in dialogue and demonstrate their will and determination to complete the electoral cycle beyond their own personal interests. In that regard, the Haitian authorities should continue to encourage their citizens to participate in the electoral process and respect the decision of the people in the election. The political tensions of recent months reflect one of the chronic problems facing that brother nation — namely, the fragile nature of its institutions.

Since its birth as an independent republic, the people of Haiti have suffered not only onslaughts of nature but also the pillaging of its resources and encroachment on its independence, which have undermined its development. The colonial heritage has had a heavy cost on its independence. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Haitian people suffered blockades, penalties and debt collected by the former colonial Power, which undermined and eroded its own development. Throughout the twentieth century and up through the twenty-first century, Haiti has been the victim of invasions and military interventions and has suffered the scourge of the worst dictators of the subcontinent. All of that undoubtedly has had a negative effect on its stability.

Combating poverty and injustice in Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas, requires the extraordinary efforts of the countries of the region and the international community. It is necessary to enhance the direct support of stable assistance mechanisms to support the people of Haiti alongside the efforts of the country's authorities. In that regard, and as was done after the ruinous 2010 earthquake, we must enhance the capacities of the United Nations through MINUSTAH and achieve the stability and development of our brother nation.

Given the current context, we remain concerned by the increased number of cholera cases and the deaths caused by the virus. Hundreds of new cases have been reported every week since 2010. To date, according to United Nations figures, more than 9,000 Haitians have died and more than 750,000 have been infected. In the first six months of 2016 there were 23,072 new cases of cholera and 211 deaths, representing a general increase from the same period in 2015. That highlights the need to strengthen national health institutions in Haiti and their capacity to respond this public health issue in order to prevent cholera from becoming endemic. We commend the efforts of the United Nations to mitigate this grave public health problem by acknowledging its moral responsibility to the victims of the outbreak of the epidemic that started in 2010.

We welcome the initiative of the Secretary-General to direct an emergency response to the cholera epidemic in Haiti and the new focus adopted by the United Nations in its campaign against its spread. We consider it vital to approve additional resources to enhance the national cholera reduction plan, including the mobilization of a package of assistance that would provide material assistance and support to the Haitians directly affected by the epidemic. Moreover, in the humanitarian sphere, we are concerned over the food and security situation arising as a result of climate change in the Caribbean, which has been impacted further by Hurricane Matthew, which is believed to have destroyed almost all harvests. In the first half of 2016, more than 3.6 million Haitians were affected by those climate factors.

We believe that in the current context of political and institutional uncertainty, which has been exacerbated by natural phenomena, we must maintain our assistance and support to the Haitian people. We therefore believe that the presence of the United Nations and MINUSTAH remains necessary in order to assist the Haitian authorities in strengthening the response capacities of their institutions. We attach particular importance to ongoing improvements to and the professionalization of the Haitian National Police, which will enhance the presence and authority of the State. It is crucial that we continue to allocate resources to rapid-impact projects that promote the rule of law, improve health services and the provision of drinking water, and increase the security of citizens through the installation of street lights.

Given the pressing challenges facing Haiti, any decision regarding the future of MINUSTAH should be based on security and stability conditions in the country in the framework of the process of building institutional capacities and in coordination with the elected authorities starting February 2017. We commend the prudent recommendation of the Secretary-General in his report to extend the presence of MINUSTAH for an additional six months and to undertake a strategic assessment mission after 7 February 2017 — once the newly elected President has taken office and a new Government is in place — in order to submit recommendations to the Security Council in April next year regarding the future presence of the United Nations, which would include an accurate assessment of the effects of recent political events and the natural disaster of Hurricane Matthew.

Venezuela is in favour of a politically and socially stable, sovereign and free Haiti. Our cooperation with Haiti expanded in an extraordinary manner under the presidency of Commandante Hugo Chávez Frías and continues with the same determination today. Venezuela and the countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America worked with Haiti long before the 2010 earthquake. That cooperation will continue to strengthen in the future. Furthermore, in the context of the Petrocaribe energy cooperation programme, since 2005 we have provided 100 per cent of Haiti's fuel needs and 20 per cent of of its electricity, and undertaken various initiatives prioritized by the Haitian Government, which have had a positive impact over the past 11 years on efforts to reconstruct Port-au-Prince and on the economic and social development of that brotherly country.

Haiti occupies a special place in the hearts of Venezuelan men and women. The Haitian revolution provided inspiration to the patriots in the nineteenth century and the liberator Simón Bolívar, who was supported 200 years ago by Haitian President Pétion during the Venezuelan War of Independence. A deep feeling of appreciation and solidarity has motivated Venezuela's assistance to Haiti.

Finally, my country joins the efforts of the region and the international community to assist that fraternal country in overcoming the socioeconomic problems that have affected it for decades. Today more than ever, such cooperation must ensure that the necessary socioeconomic conditions are created to enable the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty in the country so that it can achieve political stability and strengthen its institutions. Those preconditions are indispensable to efforts to assist Haiti in its reconstruction and development.

Mr. Lamek (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her comprehensive briefing. I again wish to assure her of the full support of France for the activities on the ground under the particularly difficult conditions in Haiti during the past few days. She has our full support. I would also like, through her, to express our support for all staff of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

I endorse the statements to be delivered by the observer of the European Union and the representative of Peru on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

At a time when Haiti continues to assess the terrible human and property toll of the recent passing of Hurricane Matthew, we would like to express our condolences to all Haitians for the recent victims. At this difficult time, France stands with Haiti. My country decided to respond immediately to the call of the Haitian authorities for humanitarian assistance.

The President of the Republic stated that all available resources would be mobilized to implement emergency assistance as quickly as possible in coordination with our European partners and the international community. That mobilization has already begun. On 5 October, at the request of the Haitian authorities, a French military aircraft flew reconnaissance flights to assess the damage done to the infrastructure and to determine what was needed to be delivered by way of humanitarian assistance. With 60 French military civilian security personnel and 90 tons of equipment, including 2 water purification plants, 6 sanitation units, medical kits and humanitarian first aid, are currently being transported or are about to be routed locally. Moreover, the French food-aid credits to Haiti have been refilled.

Finally, two helicopters have been made available by the Airbus Foundation for the purposes of medical transport and first-aid delivery to the most isolated areas. Of course, all of that is being carried out within the framework set by the Haitian Government and its representatives in the regions impacted by the disaster. Furthermore, France, together with the international community, calls for heeding the urgent appeal launched by the United Nations in the aftermath of the disaster.

This terrible tragedy reminds us once again of the scope of the humanitarian challenges facing Haiti and its people. We are particularly concerned, in the current context, by the resurgence of cholera cases. France fully supports the efforts undertaken by the Haitian authorities with the support of the United Nations. We have contributed to several quick-impact projects on the ground since 2010. We have relayed the call of the Secretary-General to bolster that mobilization and will carefully examine the proposals to be made to the General Assembly to intensify efforts to combat cholera in Haiti, as well as to provide assistance and financial support to the Haitians most directly affected by the disease. More needs to be done by the international community to finally eradicate cholera in Haiti.

France hopes that the electoral process under way will be concluded as quickly as possible so that Haiti can finally put an end to the uncertainties surrounding that issue. More than ever, Haiti needs stable institutions with democratic legitimacy that will enable it to tackle the various economic, social and humanitarian challenges that the country faces.

France has taken note of the revised electoral timetable announced by the Provisional Electoral Council and the postponement of the elections, originally scheduled for 9 October, because of the consequences of the passing of Hurricane Matthew. We urge all Haitian political stakeholders, including the provisional President, to do their utmost to ensure that the elections are held in the near future and that constitutional order is established as quickly as possible. Each individual must show responsibility and restraint in that regard. It is important that the forthcoming elections be led by the Haitians themselves and conducted in a transparent, open, inclusive and credible manner. France will contribute to that goal by participating in the electoral monitoring mission, established by the Organization of American States.

More than 12 years after the deployment of MINUSTAH, the conditions on the ground have profoundly changed, as have the country's needs. We have gradually moved from a peacekeeping situation to a context where the United Nations is called upon to assist in development and the construction of a State under a robust rule of law. Attending to that changing reality will help us to provide the most effective assistance to the Haitian people. The security and stabilization of Haiti in the long term depend first and foremost on the Haitian authorities shouldering their responsibility, as well as on the sustainable development of the island.

France is pleased to see that the security situation is generally stable. While it remains tenuous, owing to political tensions related to the successive postponements of the electoral cycle, it has nonetheless been competently managed by the Haitian security forces. In that regard, we welcome the growing authority of the Haitian National Police, demonstrated by its increasing ability to act largely independently.

It is now important that the ongoing discussions on the future of MINUSTAH be conducted as speedily as possible. France fully supports the recommendations

contained in the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2016/753), particularly with regard to the limitation of the extension of the next mandate to only six months, as well as the implementation, at the end of the current six-month mandate, of a strategic review that will allow us to consider whether the context is ripe for the drawdown of MINUSTAH and for its replacement by a new form of United Nations presence. Indeed, we believe it important that the relaunch of the Mission's reconfiguration not be indefinitely delayed on account of the political stalemate, as there is a risk of jeopardizing the United Nations capacity to best meet the needs of the Haitian population.

The situation in Haiti concerns us all even more today. The support of the international community and the engagement of the United Nations remain even more necessary than ever, but our responsibility in the Council is to do all we can to ensure that that engagement is as appropriate and as effective as possible. The challenges facing Haiti and the expectations of its people commit us to taking the decisions necessary. Haitian political stakeholders today must be fully aware of that.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting. China listened carefully to the briefing by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré.

Recently, Hurricane Matthew caused severe damage to Haiti, leaving hundreds of people dead or injured. China would like to express its sympathy and condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti. We call on the international community to actively provide Haiti with humanitarian assistance, with a focus on health care, sanitation and the supply of drinking water in the disaster-affected areas so as to prevent the renewed outbreak of cholera and other epidemics. We hope that Haiti will overcome the effects of the hurricane as soon as possible, rebuild the damaged houses at an early date, gradually complete the political transition and embark on the road to stability and development.

Development is the fundamental way to enhance Haiti's disaster resilience and recovery capacity. It is also the master key to the settlement of the question of Haiti. We hope that the Haitian Government will strengthen planning, formulate development strategies aimed at addressing conditions in the country, accelerate the building of infrastructure, advance agriculture, tourism and other important sectors, promote the rule of law, improve the humanitarian situation and ensure that the interests of vulnerable groups are guaranteed.

The international community should promptly honour its assistance commitment, enhance targeted assistance and help the Haitian Government in enhancing its governance capacity so that Haiti will be able to stand on its own and achieve development at an early date. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), under the leadership of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré, has played an important role in advancing the electoral process and maintaining security and stability in Haiti. China expresses its appreciation in that regard.

China has always maintained that United Nations peacekeeping operations should be adjusted in the light of developments in the host countries, with the ultimate purpose of withdrawing. In view of the fact that the overall security situation in Haiti is improving and that the Haitian National Police has been growing, MINUSTAH should consider withdrawal at the appropriate time and not remain endlessly in Haiti.

The Haitian Government should take upon itself the responsibility for maintaining its national security and stability. It is China's hope that the Secretariat and the Haitian Government will strengthen communication and assess the situation in Haiti in a timely manner, while ensuring stability in Haiti and the smooth functioning of the new Government. Appropriate arrangements should be made regarding the future presence of the United Nations in Haiti.

Mrs. Schwalger (New Zealand): We too have been following with heavy hearts the reports of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Matthew in the Republic of Haiti. We extend our deepest sympathy to those who have lost loved ones, suffered injury, had property damaged and their livelihoods disrupted.

There is no doubt that the hurricane has greatly exacerbated Haiti's humanitarian situation, which was already challenged by severe drought and the cholera epidemic. Food, shelter and medical care are required urgently. Longer term, Haiti will need support in rebuilding damaged infrastructure and in containing the spread of disease. Our thoughts are with the people of Haiti in these difficult days.

It is unfortunate that Haiti was forced to postpone last week's first round of elections in the wake of the

hurricane. That is yet another setback for a country that is in dire need of political certainty and stability following the failure of the electoral process earlier this year. The latest Secretary-General's report (S/2016/753) makes clear the impact that the political uncertainty in Haiti continues to have on its development towards a stable and prosperous future. Progress towards consolidating the rule of law has been slow. We urge all Haitian political actors to do everything in their power to ensure that the electoral process commences as soon as is feasible, in stable conditions and without violence. We also call on all relevant actors to spare no effort to ensure that the elections are free, fair, inclusive and transparent.

The capacity of the Haitian National Police continues to improve, and we commend its determination to provide for the safety and security of the Haitian people. But there is still work to be done before it will be operationally independent. Progress in that area is vital for the eventual reconfiguration of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Against that background, MINUSTAH continues to play an important role. New Zealand appreciates the work of the Special Representative and of MINUSTAH-contributing countries in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew and in supporting Haiti more generally. We welcome the renewal of MINUSTAH's mandate for six months. However, we all recognize that MINUSTAH cannot stay forever and that it needs to evolve as the situation on the ground allows. It is important that we lay the foundation now for that to happen smoothly and responsibly. We are reassured that MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team are continuing preparations for the Mission's transition by developing a transition plan. We also support the Secretary-General's call for a strategic assessment mission to be undertaken by the end of MINUSTAH's next mandate period.

For MINUSTAH's transition to be successful, it must have genuine national ownership. Its implementation will be the responsibility of the Government that emerges from the forthcoming electoral process. We therefore hope that the strategic assessment will be completed after a new Government is in place and that it will adequately reflect the Government's views and priorities. That adds further urgency to the need to ensure that a duly elected and legitimate President is inaugurated early in 2017. In any event, we urge the United Nations to do all it can to engage relevant Haitian stakeholders when assessing its future presence in Haiti.

We regret the impact that cholera continues to have on the people of Haiti. The United Nations has a responsibility to help address and end the outbreak and to provide appropriate support to the victims of cholera. We thank the Secretary-General for his efforts to improve the United Nations response to the cholera crisis and look forward to the new United Nations approach having a direct and positive impact.

Haiti is once again at a critical point on its path to restoring an inclusive and representative democracy. We hope that in the coming months Haiti will recover from Hurricane Matthew and complete a peaceful political transition. We also hope that the Council will remain united in supporting Haiti through this critical period.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her introduction of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2016/753).

We align ourselves with the statement to be made by the representative of Peru on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

My country conveys its solidarity and condolences to the people and the Government of Haiti for the lives lost and material damage caused by the passing of Hurricane Matthew. As noted by Mr. Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, the hurricane has caused the worst humanitarian crisis in Haiti since the 2010 earthquake. We are pleased to see that international assistance is already arriving in the country and that the United Nations and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) continue to play an important role on the ground. We are also pleased to hear of a new focus, on the part of the Secretary-General, in confronting the cholera epidemic on two levels. The first seeks to organize support and response efforts in the fight against cholera and the other will supply material assistance to those most affected by the cholera epidemic.

We welcome the ongoing progress made by the Haitian National Police and encourage further efforts to make it better able to provide security to the people. We are pleased to see that, even in these difficult circumstances, the executive branch is committed to working jointly with the Provisional Electoral Council to organize elections as soon as possible so as to ensure

the handover of power to a democratically elected President on 7 February 2017.

We await with interest the new elections timetable. According to what we have heard, it should be provided tomorrow. Despite that, we remain convinced that the strategic assessment should be carried out independently and irrespectively of the electoral timetable. That necessary strategic assessment will allow us to determine which type of United Nations presence is really required in Haiti.

Uruguay in particular has been on the ground in Haiti since MINUSTAH began, in 2004, and is there still today. With the same commitment that has driven us from the outset, today we understand that the gradual drawdown of MINUSTAH is a direction we must duly follow. Therefore a responsible transition process must be initiated, leading to the consolidation of the country's insititutions in order to achieve the development and well-being of its people.

Allow me to conclude by once again expressing my country's recognition of the men and women working as part of MINUSTAH for their dedication and commitment to recovery and stability in Haiti. In many cases these people have given up their lives in the fulfilment of their duties, including Uruguayan members of the Mission, whom I acknowledge in remembrance now.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2016/753), as well by expressing my gratitude for the briefing provided by Special Representative Sandra Honoré.

As a consequence of Hurricane Matthew, Haiti is once again suffering a new humanitarian crisis, the most devastating since the 2010 earthquake. We deeply regret this new blow dealt by nature. From the start, Spain has been in contact with the Haitian authorities and, in coordination with the international community, and has rapidly mobilized emergency assistance. I shall not dwell upon the details; I simply refer to the more than half a million dollars worth of aid, with two consignments sent on 10 and 11 October, respectively. The important thing is the immediacy of the Spanish response, which reflects the traditional solidarity of all the people of Spain with the friendly country of Haiti. Spain maintains and will maintain its commitment to Haiti, which continues to be — and I want to underscore this — the main beneficiary of Spanish official development assistance in the world.

The tragic situation in Haiti following Hurricane Matthew means that we must reflect on the country's urgent need for a Government elected through democratic, inclusive, free and transparent elections — one that can provide a strong institutional basis to promote the development and capacity of the country to confront the major challenges that lie ahead. It is therefore vital for the Government to establish, as soon as possible, a new date for the elections that were planned for 9 October, thereby reactivating the electoral process already under way. The country's return to constitutional order is more of a priority than ever.

Spain believes that the role of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) continues to be fundamental in order to ensure the necessary security conditions for the country. In the current circumstances, its contribution to security in the electoral process is even more relevant. Spain therefore supports the renewal of the MINUSTAH mandate until April 2017.

As the Secretary-General recommends, we should maintain the current authorized troop level, which we believe to be essential for the mission to fulfil its mandate. Moreover, Spain considers it timely to deploy a strategic assessment mission, circumstances permitting, in order to evaluate what form the role and presence of the United Nations in Haiti should take once the MINUSTAH mandate expires.

Spain has always maintained in its statements before the Council that decisions on MINUSTAH must be adopted in a flexible manner, depending on foresight and analyses of the short- and medium-term, as well as the changing political and security situations. This is simply because we should not risk the progress that has already been achieved. We believe the evalution of the strategic assessment mission should be carried out in close collaboration with the new Haitian Government in order to ensure the success of the transition. For this reason it is pertinent that the mission be deployed once a new President has taken office — one who has been democratically elected in Haiti — and preferably once his new Government team is in place.

Spain would like to highlight the need for these recommendations, in addition to being based on the results of the strategic assessment mission, to deal with the politico-institutional situation in the country and

assess its impact on security and stability in Haiti. We also support the notion that the Security Council should work in the most inclusive and transparent manner possible and that its decisions always take the interests and opinions of the States affected by them into account. It is for that reason that we shall listen attentively to the statement made by the Ambassador of Haiti and to his thoughts and expectations as to MINUSTAH, as well the contributions of countries involved in the Mission.

Finally, Spain aligns itself with the statement to be made by the observer of the European Union later in this meeting.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for her detailed statement, as well as for her outstanding work at the head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

On behalf of the Senagalese people and its Government, I should also like to express our sincere condolences and solidarity with the brotherly people of Haiti, who suffered a tragic blow in the wake of Hurricane Matthew early this month. Hurricane Matthee, quite frankly, has further complicated the lives of the people of Haiti, which were difficult enough before that. We are all aware of the statistics arising from this disaster, so I shall not dwell upon them. Nevertheless, suffice it to say that much human life and property has been lost, while cases of cholera have increased, exacerbated by floods and damage to numerous health centres. That is why my country would once again urge the international community to mobilize the delivery of humanitarian assistance commensurate with the damage suffered by the Haitian people.

In addition to the emergency situation caused by this catastrophe, we have seen yet another postponement of the electoral process in spite of the efforts of the Haitian authorities, who, as we know, were forced to postpone the elections. In spite of this new ordeal, my country calls on the Haitian Government to spare no effort to organize free, transparent and credible elections as soon as possible. We welcome the outstanding work accomplished by the good offices of Special Representative Honoré and congratulate her efforts and those of her team to ensure a return to constitutional order, peace, stability and prosperity in Haiti. Ms. Honoré may rest assured that she has the renewed support of the Senegalese Government.

I should like also to pay tribute to MINUSTAH not only for the role it is playing during this difficult time but also for everything that it is doing in Haiti. The most striking example, perhaps, is its cooperation with the Haitian National Police in order to ensure the security of the elections. Senegal, which has a presence in the Mission through its police units, urges the Security Council to provide all necessary support to the Mission by supporting the recommendations emanating from the recent visit made to the country by the Department for Peacekeeping Operations from 30 June to 3 July.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for presenting the report on the activities of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which she heads, as well as her detailed statement concerning the situation in the country. We express our condolences to the families of the victims of Hurricane Matthew, which tore through the Caribbean last week. We hope that Haiti, with the help of the international community, will be able very quickly to rebuild after this natural disaster.

We take note of the fact that, owing to the hurricane, the presidential and parliamentary elections in the country have been postponed yet again. We hope that Ms. Honoré will present the next report when Haiti has a duly elected President.

We continue to follow the development of the internal political situation in the country. More than three months after the expiry of the 120-day term of the provisional President, the National Assembly has yet to adopt measures to ensure continuity in the functioning of the executive, in line with the provisions of the agreement of 5 February. Unfortunately, the country continues to face political and institutional uncertainty, which poses an obstacle to its sustainable economic and social development. We urge all key stakeholders in the country to make efforts jointly to tackle the most relevant task today, that is, the conclusion of the electoral process and the appointment of the new head of the executive, so as to serve all Haitians.

We welcome the intention of the Government to ensure transparent and democratic elections, which are to take place without any external intervention. We are satisfied that technical preparations for this important

event over the past month have gone smoothly, and we hope to see a successful finish to the electoral race. Haiti cannot afford any fresh stalemates in the light of the numerous social and economic issues facing its people.

We wish also to express our concern regarding a certain surge in the number of cholera cases. On the one hand, we welcome the vigorous measures taken by the United Nations to counter this dangerous disease and overcome its impact. On the other hand, Port-au-Prince must also do its part to deal with issues such the provision of water as well as sanitation and health-care services. Resolving these problems will depend not only on outside financing but also on the efforts of local administrative bodies. Another priority is providing people with information about the disease and ways to avoid infection. Indeed, forewarned is forearmed.

We would like to see the full implementation of MINUSTAH's mandate. The capacity of the Haitian National Police is ever-growing, and it has demonstrated its ability and determination to ensure law and order. It is encouraging that the rise in crime is being contained. Any strikes are essentially for social and economic reasons, just as in other countries of the world. The police have been able to ensure control over mass events; they still receive support from MINUSTAH but in the near future should become fully operationally independent, in line with national law.

We stand ready to carefully study the review of the United Nations presence in the country, which ideally should be carried out after the elections and the swearing-in of the new President, and should involve also an assessment of the professionalism and number of Haitian National Police troops. We hope that the document will contain information as to the results of activities carried out in past years as well as arrangements for a gradual drawdown of the United Nations presence in the country. In the context of preparations for this forthcoming stage, we need to develop a plan for the transition period and persistently strengthen MINUSTAH.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Haiti.

Mr. Régis (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): I would be remiss were I not to begin my statement by conveying the heartfelt thanks and gratitude of the people and the Government of Haiti for the kind words and demonstrations of solidarity expressed to my country following the destructive strike of Hurricane Matthew last week, with its tragic consequences. To one and all, I say thank you, thank you, thank you, on behalf of the people and the Government of Haiti.

I am pleased to have the chance once again to share the views of the Haitian Government on the important report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2016/753), issued pursuant to resolution 2243 (2015), of 14 October 2015. Allow me also to express to the Security Council the deep gratitude of the President of the Republic and the Government of Haiti for its steadfast commitment for close to 12 years now in the process of building the rule of law and democracy in Haiti.

The Government of Haiti would like also to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for the high quality of his report to the Security Council. This document yet again bears witness, as if any more proof were needed, to the Secretary-General's ongoing leadership in ensuring the success of the mandate of MINUSTAH.

With the balance and objectivity characteristic of the Secretary-General, he takes an in-depth look at the various dimensions of the Haitian crisis stemming from the interruption in January 2016 of the electoral process and at the institutional difficulties and structural and context-based obstacles facing the country at this critical juncture, and voices concerns regarding the various challenges the country faces in the areas of security and human rights and on the humanitarian front. He also takes a close look at the achievements registered while underscoring the work that remains to be done so as to conclude the electoral cycle under way, which, as we all know, is crucial to Haiti's long-term stability.

The Government has duly taken note of the observations made by the Secretary-General. The return to constitutional order on 7 February 2017 is indeed the binding obligation that falls to the Haitian Government. The President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Jocelerme Privert, has made it the key feature of his work as Head of State. As he has pointed out repeatedly, in particular on 23 September from the rostrum of the General Assembly, (see A/71/PV.17), he has no other mandate than that which was invested

in him by the National Assembly in accordance with the agreement of 5 February, namely, the completion and of the electoral process. Shouldering this historical responsibility, he is sparing no effort in achieving the conditions that will foster the organization of free, inclusive and fair presidential and legislative elections, under the aegis of the Provisional Electoral Council (PEC), allowing for the reset and normalization of our democratic institutions.

The results achieved to date have been convincing. The Electoral Council has hit its stride. The electoral process is going smoothly despite the uncertainties of some of the most difficult economic and financial factors, characterized by, inter alia, the freezing and reduction of development aid. Of the total budget estimated at $55 million, the Government has already disbursed a first tranche of $25 million, enabling the PEC to hold the first round of elections. The campaign was launched on 23 August. The overhaul of the electoral mechanism, making it more reliable in line with the recommendations of independent electoral evaluation and verification commission, ensures the holding of fair and transparent elections. The first round of elections was set for 9 October.

The upcoming elections are a necessary right of passage. Only they can dispel the "prevailing political uncertainty" mentioned in the Secretary-General's report (*S/2016/753, para. 10*) to overcome the institutional crisis and finally address structural deficiencies, which are hampering the economic and social modernization of the country and are obstacles to the full development of human rights. The Government is grateful to the Secretary-General for welcoming in his report the "promising signs" that are reflected in

> [t]he commitment displayed so far by the national authorities to assume greater ownership of all facets of the electoral process, including financial and operational aspects" (*ibid., para. 58*).

Similarly, we particularly appreciates his call to all our international partners for constructive cooperation in considering

> "further financial contributions, in particular with a view to strengthening the electoral council's capacity to manage the logistical aspects of the electoral process" (*ibid., para. 59*).

Finally, the Government fully aligns itself with the call for the partners to redeploy

> "international electoral observation and expert missions ... to diversify levels of scrutiny and promote confidence in the electoral process" (*ibid., para. 59*).

Turning to security, the Government believes that, in the current context, MINUSTAH's support to the Haitian National Police aimed at strengthening security, which is necessary for the success of the electoral process, remains crucial. It therefore notes with the greatest of interest the recommendation made by the Secretary-General that

> "the mandate of MINUSTAH be extended for a further six months, until 15 April 2017" (*ibid., para. 61*).

With regard to the longer-term presence of MINUSTAH, the Government is in favour, following the elections, of sending the strategic assessment mission, the concept of which has already been agreed. It is well understood that the next Government, once elected, will have to jointly define with the members of the Security Council the terms of reference for the future Mission as well as the dimensions of the new configuration. Nevertheless, we believe it useful to recall the principled position of the Government with regard to the MINUSTAH transition plan under way and the profile of the future Mission, both of which must fully take into account the changing situation on the ground. In that respect, the smooth rolling out of the forthcoming elections should be a key indicator for the prospects for stabilization and medium- and long-term security needs.

The key is to safeguard the achievements of MINUSTAH's presence over past 12 years and enable Haitian institutions, in particular the Haitian National Police, to gradually and effectively take over the roles previously filled by the Mission. In the immediate future, and in tandem with the electoral process, we are supporting the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which is working with police-contributing countries, to offset the current shortfall of 250 police officers against the authorized level of 951 officers.

The Secretary-General's report highlights a number of other challenges and notes his particular concerns about the worsening social, economic and humanitarian situation. It should be stressed that the recent reduction in official development assistance and the freezing of various cooperation programmes have significantly

reduced public investment in necessary infrastructure, while limiting the United Nations response capability in providing humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable groups in Haiti.

Moreover, the resurgence of the cholera epidemic has compounded an already deeply troubling health situation. In that regard, while we express our hope that, at the highest level, further talks between Haiti and the United Nations on the cholera epidemic will be undertaken as soon as possible, the Government wishes to commend the concerted action that the Secretary-General is deploying to implement a more substantial package that

> "would provide material assistance and support to those Haitians directly affected by cholera, [including victims of the disease and their families]" (*ibid, para 62*).

The Government also notes with the greatest of interest the urgent call of the Secretary-General for

> "Member States to demonstrate their solidarity with the people of Haiti by increasing their contributions to efforts to eliminate cholera and provide assistance to those affected" (*Ibid, para 62*).

In that vein, I would be remiss not to highlight the new approach recently adopted by the United Nations with regard to the cholera epidemic, which has been raging in Haiti since 2010. With admirable frankness, the Secretary-General officially acknowledged, based on irrefutable evidence, that the United Nations had a moral responsibility towards the victims of the cholera epidemic and that therefore, given the role it had played in the outbreak of the epidemic and the suffering of victims, it was incumbent upon the Organization to do more and make every effort to help Haiti in overcoming it.

We welcome that courageous new attitude, which echoes the suffering of the victims and above all sends a clear message to the international community about the importance of switching from words to action in order to help Haiti deal with a humanitarian situation that has just deteriorated alarmingly in the wake of Hurricane Matthew. For the United Nations this is more than a moral imperative, it is a duty of international solidarity that will require a far more substantial effort than previous ones in order to significantly step up the fight against cholera, slow its progression and ultimately eliminate it, by helping the Government to develop the infrastructure needed to address its structural problems related to the provision of drinking water, sanitation and health care in Haiti. We hope that the new two-part approach recommended by the Secretary-General will result in an ambitious programme of action that will finally be equal to these challenges and that the Haitian people have been pleading for for a long time.

In the same spirit, we welcome the enthusiasm of the international solidarity that has been expressed to the victims of last week's disastrous hurricane, which, as the Council is aware, resulted in tremendous damage in various parts of the country, particularly the south, and which, as is understandable, has forced the general elections originally set for 9 October to be postponed to a later date. The Government of the Republic of Haiti is deeply grateful to all the friendly countries, the cooperative partners, the United Nations and the non-governmental organizations that have stood spontaneously and generously with the Haitian people in the face of a situation that has once again bordered on tragedy in some of the affected areas. The Government is grateful to the United Nations for the joint appeal to international solidarity, launched on 10 October, with the goal of collecting $120 million for aid for the next three months to the communities that have been tragically affected by Hurricane Matthew.

In order to avoid the problems resulting from the fragmentation, misuse and ineffectiveness of aid that Haiti has unfortunately experienced all too often in the past, the Government hopes fervently that international action and donor contributions can be smoothly synchronized with the efforts of local stakeholders and appropriately channeled through the existing coordination mechanisms for external cooperation that have already been shown to work elsewhere.

My country is at a crossroads. The next elections will be a test of our consolidation of a culture of democracy and the country's long-term stability, economic modernization and development. The Government is fully aware of this and intends to show itself equal to the challenge and its mission. It is prepared to make every sacrifice and to take on its obligations in full, despite the extremely tenuous means at its disposal. It calls for cooperation on the part of all of Haiti's partners on the logistical, financial and operational fronts, in order to enable the Provisional Electoral Council to complete the election process and to perform its urgent mission efficiently and effectively at this difficult juncture.

The Government of Haiti would like to once again assure all of its partners in the international community that it will spare no effort to ensure the success of the forthcoming elections, which will be the proof of the peaceful political transition and return to a functional constitutional order that are the conditions for lasting political stability.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. De Aguiar Patriota (Brazil): We thank the Russian Federation for organizing this important debate on the situation in Haiti. I would also like to thank Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for her briefing and to reiterate my Government's gratitude and respect for her work and continuing support to the consolidation of peace and democracy in Haiti. And I thank Ambassador Denis Régis for his statement.

Brazil is standing by Haiti at another difficult moment. Hurricane Matthew's passing through the Caribbean last week created the worst humanitarian crisis there since the devastating earthquake six years ago. We send our heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and we reiterate our willingness to help the Haitian Government to provide immediate assistance for the hundreds of thousands of people in urgent need. We commend the troops of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for their commitment and we recognize the work they have been doing in these difficult days for Haiti. Even before the arrival of the hurricane, the military personnel of MINUSTAH's Brazilian contingent were deployed to the most vulnerable parts of the country. In an impressive effort, they cleared roads and prepared airports to receive humanitarian aid in Les Cayes. They were the first to arrive by land in Jérémie, the capital of the worst affected department. As I speak, they are already supporting the Haitian authorities in the most challenging period for the reconstruction activities.

Despite the necessary and justifiable postponement of the first round of elections, the Haitian authorities should not slacken the momentum for organizing their new date as soon as possible. Brazil strongly urges Haiti's political actors to work cooperatively in the interests of their people, while joining forces in prioritizing the country's return to full constitutional normality by completing the electoral process that is already under way in order to ensure the holding of free, fair, inclusive and transparent presidential and legislative elections. It is also crucial to ensure that Haiti's political stakeholders spare no effort in encouraging citizens to develop a greater level of involvement in the upcoming electoral rounds.

Brazil agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment regarding stability and security in Haiti, while recognizing that the security situation remains relatively calm but fragile, owing to the prevailing political uncertainty. There are still reasons for concern about security, including gang activity, the smuggling of weapons, and politically motivated violence. We support the recommended extension of MINUSTAH's mandate for an additional six months until 15 April 2017, while maintaining the current troop and police levels. According to Interim President Jocelerme Privert's recent statement in the General Assembly (see A/71/PV.17), the military and police components continue to have a very relevant role in the country's logistics, humanitarian and security operations.

Regarding the strategic assessment mission to be undertaken for MINUSTAH, with a view to making recommendations for a future United Nations presence in the country, we expect that it will happen after the installation of the new President and the formation of a new Government. It is crucial to the success of any future decision to ensure that the United Nations conducts that pivotal process in consultation with the appropriate Haitian interlocutors. It is also essential to ensure that the reconfiguration process be guided by conditions on the ground and by the need to preserve and consolidate the progress that has been made in the past 12 years. Any prejudgement of the situation may jeopardize investments made by the international community in stabilizing the country so far.

We concur with the Secretary-General's observation that the Haitian National Police is not yet operationally independent and continues to rely on MINUSTAH's support to fulfil its constitutional mandate. Despite its enhanced performance in preventing crimes and controlling civil unrest, we note with regret that the police force will not be able to reach the target of 15,000 officers by the end of 2016, as initially envisaged. Furthermore, we are concerned that only half of the Haitian National Police development plan for the period 2012-2016, one of the benchmarks of the Mission, has been attained so far.

During the transition period, we encourage the Security Council to keep tools that are part of the MINUSTAH mandate aimed at developing quick-impact and community violence-reduction projects, as well as an adequate engineering capability. Experience in Haiti has clearly shown that such initiatives directly benefit the local population and assist in building confidence in the peace process and the Mission throughout its life cycle. Any future presence of the Organization in Haiti should take this success story into account and ensure the continuity of such activities in order to contribute to the sustainability of reconstruction efforts.

The humanitarian situation continues to raise serious concern. Hurricane Matthew negatively impacted the living conditions of a significant number of internally displaced people, currently at 61,000, in a context of an increase in the number of new cholera cases and a decrease in the levels of food and nutrition security in rural areas. We commend the tireless response activities of the Government of Haiti and the United Nations, and underline the particular importance and urgency of the Haiti humanitarian response plan 2016 appeal, launched jointly to meet the critical humanitarian needs of 1.3 million people, including of the Haitians and persons of Haitian descent returning from the Dominican Republic.

Brazil also underscores the importance of strengthening Haiti's national health institutions and United Nations efforts to combat cholera, including through the Secretary-General's initiative to support the national plan for the elimination of cholera for the period 2013-2022. We welcome his intention to develop a package that would provide additional material assistance and support for those Haitians directly affected by the disease. The Brazilian Government built, and currently supports, three community hospitals and one rehabilitation centre in Haiti, the largest project implemented so far by Brazil in terms cooperation, with a budget of $90 million.

The Brazilian Government is also committed to maintaining its humanitarian cooperation efforts, as well as the current special immigration policy for Haitians. In that regard, I wish to recall that, according to the Brazil declaration entitled "A Framework for Cooperation and Regional Solidarity to Strengthen the International Protection of Refugees", adopted in Brasilia on 3 December 2014, Latin American Governments consider people fleeing from natural disasters as victims who should be received and protected.

We recall that the Peacebuilding Commission could assume a central role in the stabilization and development efforts in Haiti. Access to justice and poverty reduction are important elements in the promotion of Haiti's development and stability, which deserve more careful consideration. They can help to empower the weakest and the poorest, especially through the effectiveness of social rights, and produce tangible dividends for the most vulnerable. In that regard, attention should be given to the further strengthening of Haitian judicial and correctional systems in order to support a more integrated and cohesive Haitian security sector. The programmatic resources recently allocated to those efforts can certainly contribute to reverse the slow progress towards consolidating the rule of law in Haiti.

(*spoke in French*)

Brazil continues to be committed to its Haitian brother and sisters in their efforts to establish a stable democracy and sustainable development. We are convinced that, as in several other periods of difficulty, Haitians will be able to overcome the current difficulties. The people of Haiti deserve all our support in order to break with the cycle of instability and political uncertainty, including through our support to the elections and the swearing in of a new President in Feburary 2017.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to Mr. João Pedro Vale de Almeida, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Vale De Almeida (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 member States.

I thank the Secretary General for his report (S/2016/753), and the Special Representative for her briefing. I also thank the Permanent Representative of Haiti for his statement.

The following countries align themselves with this statement: the candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; potential candidate country Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia.

At the outset, I would like to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti,

who have been affected by Hurricane Matthew. The European Union, in solidarity with the people of Haiti, has decided to step up its support with a contribution of €1.5 million of emergency assistance to meet immediate needs. That funding is in addition to the €255,000 of humanitarian aid initially provided by the European Union and the funds made available by our members under the European Civil Protection Mechanism.

Following the contested outcome of the elections in August and October 2015, the first round of presidential elections was annulled. The term of office of the interim President, which expired in June this year, was not renewed. The country is therefore in an anomalous institutional situation, and one that is very fragile. The completion of the electoral process in a context of legitimacy and transparency is the fundamental precondition for ensuring political and institutional stability. Concluding the process is also an urgent need to allow Haiti to face up to the many economic, social and environmental challenges facing the country.

As in recent years, the efforts of all to ensure stability and security continue to be vital for the democratic consolidation process. The European Union remains a faithful partner of the Republic of Haiti and continues to be determined to support the country during this delicate stage, working with other partners.

The European Union supported the holding of general elections in Haiti both in August and October 2015 in two ways: through a financial contribution of €5 million to the Trust Fund managed by the United Nations system, and by sending an election observation mission, which was requested by the Haitian authorities and in agreement with them. That mission, in a totally independent manner and according to a methodology and an established code of conduct in line with international standards, verified the compliance of all stages of the process with regional and international obligations and standards for elections, as well as with Haitian legislation.

According to the mission's observations, despite some irregularities, there were no significant problems with the outcomes of the first round of the presidential elections. However, the annulment of the results of the first round of the presidential elections and its consequences, which in fact go against the conclusions of the European Union election observation mission, led the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission to take the decision to withdraw that election observation mission.

Beyond the judgment that the international community might draw on the annulment of the first round of the presidential elections, following a process that was not provided for under Haitian law and was not based on any agreement, it is clear that, in any case, the electoral process must continue and lead to peace, inclusion, transparency and legitimacy. As soon as possible the country must return to constitutional normality, with a President and a Government that are elected in transparent, inclusive and credible elections.

The European Union has taken note of the revised electoral timetable, which was announced by the Provisional Electoral Council, and the delay in the balloting planned for 9 October due to the impact of Hurricane Matthew. We call upon all political actors in Haiti, in particular the interim President, to do everything possible to complete the electoral cycle under way and return to constitutional order as soon as possible. Everyone must demonstrate responsibility and restraint in that regard.

The European Union is a long-time supporter and a friend of Haiti. It is also one of its main donors in terms of emergency assistance and in development aid. This financial support from the European Union, however, depends on respect for democratic principles, including the right of the people to choose their own Government through the ballot box, and not through street demonstrations. Political conditionality clauses are an integral part of the Cotonou Agreement, which links the European Union to the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, of which Haiti is a member. Institutional stability is essential if European aid is to be effective and produce lasting effects that benefit the population. It is urgent and necessary to establish democratically elected and legitimate institutions that can immediately address the major economic and structural challenges the country faces.

Although the overall security situation remains stable, it is nonetheless fragile due to tensions caused by the electoral climate. The European Union commends the professionalism of the Haitian National Police, which successfully managed the recent events on its own, for the most part. It believes that the presence of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in the country, and in particular its support in maintaining security during elections, always bearing

in mind respect for and the protection of human rights and the principles of sovereignty, remain important, even now, in ensuring that the process continues and that peace and stability prevail. Once conditions allow, based on the Secretary-General's recommendations, we encourage reflection on the future of MINUSTAH.

In conclusion, I would like to express the European Union's gratitude for the significant contribution made by MINUSTAH to stabilizing the security situation and bolstering democracy and the rule of law in Haiti. The European Union remains committed to supporting the efforts of the Haitian authorities, the United Nations and the international community to ensure a better future for the people of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to offer the condolences and solidarity of Mexico to the people of Haiti for the tragic loss of life and the damage caused by Hurricane Matthew. Mexico joins the international community in offering humanitarian assistance to prevent the spread of the cholera epidemic and restore the supply of urgent basic services as soon as possible. On instructions from President Enrique Peña Nieto, my Government will provide resources, through the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation, to support Haiti in meeting those basic needs.

The Government of Mexico would also like to thank Ms. Sandra Honoré for her work and dedication and the Secretary-General for his report on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2016/753).

In spite of the delays in the electoral process in Haiti, it is important to acknowledge that the political players have made considerable progress, such as the re-establishment of the Provisional Electoral Council and the drafting of an electoral timetable. We are well aware that the hurricane's impact affected the elections scheduled for 9 October, but we believe that Haiti cannot allow itself to be brought to a standstill yet again. That is why we eagerly await the announcement of a new election date and call on the political stakeholders to pool their efforts to prioritize stability, institution-building and the restoration of constitutional order. Mexico shares the Secretary-General's concern with regard to the rise in the level of food insecurity among a significant segment of the Haitian population, as well as the increase in the number of cholera cases in that sisterly nation. We believe that it is essential to strengthen efforts to prevent those challenges from jeopardizing Haiti's present and future.

It is at critical moments like these, as Haiti seeks to grapple with the impact of Hurricane Matthew, that we recognize and value the vital role played by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Mexico reiterates the importance of ensuring that the possible drawdown of MINUSTAH is gradual and cautious and takes into account the progress made in overcoming the humanitarian emergency and strengthening political stability in the country. The plan for Haiti's transition should be based on coordination between MINUSTAH, the States Members of the United Nations — in particular troop- and police-contributing countries — and, above all, the Haitian Government.

We note the recommendations of the Secretary-General on extending the MINUSTAH mandate by six months. We hope that the strategic assessment to be made on the situation in Haiti will take into consideration, first, the situation on the ground; secondly, adjustments made to the election timetable and the restoration of constitutional order; thirdly, the security situation in the country; and fourthly, the progress made in enhancing the professionalism and the operational capabilities of the Haitian National Police.

We believe that such an assessment should be conducted once the electoral process has been completed. In that way, the Secretary-General would have a comprehensive understanding of the situation so as to be able to offer recommendations on the future of MINUSTAH. Mexico hopes that the strengthening of institutions, and in particular of the Haitian National Police, will remain the cornerstone of efforts to restructure the United Nations presence in Haiti. Cooperation with MINUSTAH will remain vital to addressing issues of public order and to combating crime, as well as to ensuring that the Haitian National Police is better trained and able to shoulder greater responsibility.

In conclusion, I would like to make it clear that Mexico, as a troop-contributing country, is grateful to other States that provide troops and police, to the Group of Friends of Haiti and to all of those who take part in MINUSTAH. Mexico is committed to continuing to work to lay the foundations of lasting peace in Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Morales López (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Russian Federation for having convened today's debate on the situation in Haiti and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, Ambassador Sandra Honoré, for her detailed briefing to the Security Council.

Colombia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the Ambassador of Peru on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

At the outset, allow me to extend the condolences of Colombia to the people and the Government of Haiti and to the loved ones of the hundreds of victims claimed by Hurricane Matthew as it swept through the Caribbean. We would also like to offer our solidarity in the light of the immense damage. Colombia sought to help ease the painful situation being endured by the Haitian population by donating emergency humanitarian aid, consisting of food and hygiene kits, which arrived on the coast of Port-au-Prince today on our national naval vessel *7 August*.

We would like to acknowledge the efforts of Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council in accepting most of the recommendations of the Independent Electoral Evaluation Commission, which will allow for presidential elections to be held. In that regard, we reaffirm the importance of ensuring that the elections are free, fair, peaceful and fully respectful of democratic values and principles. Colombia is making an appeal to ensure that the devastation caused by Hurricane Matthew does not lead to unnecessary delays in the revised election timetable. It is crucial to maintain the rule of law in Haiti, and it is up to its Government and leaders to honour that commitment. Colombia shares the concerns outlined in the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/753) with regard to the slow progress being made in consolidating the rule of law, as well as to the social and economic inequalities that have led to a significant increase in the number of protests and strikes since April.

We are also concerned that, four months before the deadline date for implementation, only 58 per cent of the development plan for 2012-2016 has been implemented. The humanitarian challenges that Haiti faces are being exacerbated by the impact of the latest natural disaster and the increase in the number of suspected cases of cholera and the deaths resulting from the disease. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's intention to prepare a package of material assistance and support measures for Haitians who have been directly affected. Colombia believes that the advances made in the areas of security, rule of law, national reconciliation and sustainable development, including the fight against joblessness and poverty, are mutually reinforcing.

Once again, we highlight the invaluable work done by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, and in particular the leadership of Sandra Honoré as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission, to ensure the sustainable well-being of the Haitian people. Our country reiterates its position that any decision about the permanence of MINUSTAH should be taken solely on the basis of the conditions on the ground, while taking into account the Mission's contribution to the security and stability of the Haitian people, thereby avoiding backsliding in the progress already achieved.

We recognize the important efforts of the Haitian National Police to increase its numbers, the ground it covers and its institutional strengthening. Colombia reaffirms its interest in maintaining its support for MINUSTAH by sending more Colombian police officers and by providing advice and training to officers of the Haitian National Police.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her briefing. We appreciate her leadership in these difficult circumstances. We also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representative of Haiti, Ambassador Denis Regis.

Chile aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the delegation of Peru on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Chile, I would like to extend my sincere condolences to our Haitian brothers and sisters in connection wiht the devastating loss of life and material damage caused by Hurricane Matthew. We assure them of our solidarity, which initially consisted of a financial contribution through the International Committee of the Red Cross, with additional assistance to be provided later based on

Haiti's priorities. The latter includes the work on the ground being done by our national contingent as part of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which is supporting all the tasks that it is responsible for in responding to this catastrophe.

This is a reminder to the international community that it must continue to support Haiti. It is essential that the major donors support the recent emergency humanitarian appeal launched by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which seeks to raise $119 million to provide immediate lifesaving assistance to more than 750,000 Haitians.

We must contextualize the terrible impact of the hurricane within the existing chronic vulnerabilities of a country that is highly prone to natural disasters and where there are also various long-term humanitarian and development challenges. As such, it is crucial to strengthen the response to overcome food insecurity and the cholera epidemic, among other challenges. In that regard, we note the recent strategy of the Secretary-General along two axes and we look forward to its prompt submission to the General Assembly. In this complex scenario, it is more important than ever that all the Haitian political players work cooperatively and constructively to make progress in strengthening the State and its institutions. We are confident that once the emergency situation has been normalized, the electoral timetable will be re-established.

With regard to the strengthening of MINUSTAH, my delegation supports the Secretary-General's proposal set out in his report contained in document S/2016/753. We believe that these recommendations are adequately reflected in the text, which is currently under consideration by the Security Council.

It remains essential to continue strengthening national capacities in terms of the police, the rule of law, democracy and human rights, under the principle of national ownership, so as to build on the gains achieved thanks to the presence of the Mission.

Historically, the Haitian people have demonstrated unique resilience. There is no doubt that once again they will use that resilience to overcome the greatest humanitarian catastrophe since the 2010 earthquake. I would like to conclude by reiterating Chile's commitment to strengthening Haiti's institutions and to the development of Haiti and its people. We call on Council members to adopt by consensus the draft resolution that will renew the Mission's mandate, thereby showing the unity needed at this time.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti, which includes Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Guatemala, the United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and my country, Peru.

I would like to join other speakers in regretting the tragic loss of life and devastation wrought by Hurricane Matthew and to share in the expressions of solidarity with the people of Haiti.

The Group of Friends welcomes the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, and wishes to thank her for her comprehensive briefing and for the hard work she is doing.

Strengthening the rule of law and democratic institutions, establishing a political culture conducive to democratic stability and improving socioeconomic conditions are key elements needed to achieve greater security, stability and prosperity in Haiti. In that regard, the Group of Friends deeply regrets the damage caused by Hurricane Matthew. The Group of Friends calls upon the international community for humanitarian assistance and is pleased that the United Nations system and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) have been assisting in evacuations of vulnerable communities and other responses to the emergency needs of the country.

The Group of Friends recognizes the postponement of the 9 October elections established in the revised electoral calendar as a result of Hurricane Matthew, but strongly hopes that the consequences of Hurricane Matthew will not jeopardize the deadlines of the revised calendar. Even with the devastation brought about by Hurricane Matthew, we urge the Government of Haiti to hold elections as soon as possible. The final results of the presidential election should be announced by 30 January 2017, and the installation of the newly elected President should take place on 7 February 2017, in accordance with the Haitian Constitution.

The Group of Friends underscores the importance of the Government of Haiti, the Provisional Electoral Council, as well as political parties and all political actors, ensuring that the upcoming rounds of elections

are conducted in a free, fair, inclusive, peaceful, transparent, credible and democratic manner and in accordance with the electoral law. The Group of Friends welcomes the efforts carried out by the Special Representative to promote the continuation of dialogue among all the national actors in order to strengthen the political process.

The Group of Friends recognizes the increased capacity of the Haitian National Police and acknowledges the important role of MINUSTAH in ensuring stability and security in Haiti. In the light of Haiti's current security challenges, including those related to the ongoing elections, the Secretary-General should continue monitoring closely the situation on the ground. In line with his latest report (S/2016/753), the Secretary-General should conduct a strategic assessment mission to Haiti by the end of the new mandate, which is to say, before April 2017, and preferably after the inauguration of a newly elected President and, on that basis, should present his recommendations on the possible withdrawal of MINUSTAH and the future presence and role of the United Nations in Haiti in his next report to the Security Council.

The Group of Friends expresses gratitude to the personnel of MINUSTAH and to their countries and pays tribute to those injured or killed in the line of duty. The Group of Friends commends the wide range of reconstruction efforts in Haiti and the successful work done by MINUSTAH's military engineering units.

The Group of Friends reiterates the importance of the commitment by the Government of Haiti to strengthening the rule of law and to making further progress in the judiciary and the security sectors. In that respect, the Group would like to welcome the ongoing strengthening, professionalization and reform of the Haitian National Police, to reiterate that police capacity-building should remain a most critical task for MINUSTAH and to note that the Haitian National Police has continued to implement its 2012-2016 development plan, and to note as well MINUSTAH's support for the development of the 2017-2021 strategic plan.

The Group of Friends notes with concern the slow progress towards consolidating the rule of law and calls on the Haitian Government to address the deficiencies in the justice and corrections systems, prolonged pretrial detention, prison overcrowding, widespread corruption and the denial of human rights, including fair trial guarantees.

The Group of Friends notes the continuing work of the Government of Haiti, MINUSTAH and others to protect members of vulnerable groups and urges the utmost attention of all actors to preventing and reducing violent crime, particularly against women and children, including rape and other sexual violence crimes, and supports continued violence-reduction efforts that promote the well-being of at-risk youth and vulnerable communities. The Group of Friends continues to support attention to gender and child-protection issues.

The Group of Friends also expresses concern about the continuing humanitarian challenges and underlines the importance and urgency of the humanitarian response plan appeal launched jointly by the Government of Haiti and the United Nations to meet the critical humanitarian needs of 1.3 million people. The Group of Friends notes with concern that food insecurity was prevalent even before the current flooding of farm lands and loss of livestock.

The ongoing efforts to eliminate the cholera epidemic remind us of the importance of sustaining cooperation between the international community and the Government of Haiti to meet the needs of the Haitian people. The Group of Friends takes note of the intention of the Secretary-General to develop a package that would provide material assistance and support to those Haitians directly affected by cholera.

The Group of Friends of Haiti reiterates its commitment to the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, recalling resolution 2272 (2016), and in this regard expects all United Nations personnel to adhere to the highest standards of conduct. The Group urges all actors involved to assume their responsibilities in order to prevent such cases, investigate allegations and hold accountable those responsible.

The Group stresses that there can be no genuine stability or sustainable development in Haiti without strengthening democratic institutions and credible democratic processes. In that context, the Group emphasizes the importance of promoting the rule of law through the strengthening of Haitian institutions and further reaffirms the responsibility of MINUSTAH for supporting the Haitian State by promoting improved governance structures, the extension of State authority and the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with its mandate.

The Group of Friends reaffirms its solidarity with and commitment to the people and the Government of Haiti in their pursuit of stability, reconstruction, recovery, socioeconomic development and democratic consolidation.

The Group of Friends of Haiti acknowledges the important role of MINUSTAH in supporting the efforts of the Government of Haiti to provide stability and security in Haiti, and expresses its support for and recognition to the women and men of MINUSTAH for their dedication and tireless efforts to support recovery and stability in Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Grant (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Let me start by thanking Ms. Sandra Honoré for her briefing earlier today and her ongoing leadership.

Canada aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Peru on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

Allow me, on behalf of all Canadians, to express our solidarity and friendship with the Haitian people after the devastation wrought by Hurricane Matthew. We are saddened by the heavy loss of life caused by the hurricane in Haiti. In view of those tragic circumstances, our immediate thoughts are naturally with the victims and their families and loved ones. We are committed to helping the stricken people of Haiti and will support them during these trying times.

Canada rapidly deployed the Canadian Disaster Assessment Team to Haiti, which worked closely with Haitian authorities and international humanitarian organizations to assess the most pressing needs. Canada has already allocated more than $4.5 million to meet the urgent needs expressed by our partners. Canada's humanitarian assistance is being delivered through United Nations humanitarian agencies and international organizations that are currently on the ground to address the emergency needs of vulnerable populations in such areas as shelter, food assistance, water, sanitation and basic health care in the coming days and weeks.

This natural disaster poses an additional challenge to the organization of elections originally scheduled for 9 October. Helping victims must remain our top priority. Canada notes the decision of the Provisional Electoral Council to take stock of the situation after the hurricane and to communicate its assessment on Wednesday, 12 October. Canada urges the Haitian authorities, including the Provisional Electoral Council, to continue to pursue the electoral process diligently and resolutely and to provide an election date as soon as possible in order to inaugurate an elected president on 7 February 2017, at the latest. We also encourage all political actors, civil society and each citizen to contribute actively to a successful electoral process.

The restoration of constitutional order through impartial, credible and transparent elections is an essential step towards greater stability and prosperity in Haiti. The emergence of strong democratic institutions, guided by the principles of representativeness and good governance, is an absolute prerequisite for the country's reconstruction on a solid and sustainable foundation.

(*spoke in English*)

I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate Canada's support for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the renewal of its mandate on the basis of proposals made by the Secretary-General and the Group of Friends of Haiti. We are also grateful to MINUSTAH and its components for their work in the country and with the population in the wake of this devastating hurricane.

As highlighted by the Secretary-General in his most recent report to the Security Council (S/2016/753), the security situation remains fragile and the Haitian National Police must continue to rely on the support of the international community to pursue its professionalization and, ultimately, to fully and independently assume its security prerogatives. Consequently, Canada remains convinced that any decision regarding the mandate, composition and fate of MINUSTAH must be in keeping with the situation on the ground and the Haitian National Police's ability to fully discharge its duties as a public service. MINUSTAH must also continue to have the resources and means necessary to carry out its mission. While MINUSTAH is not a permanent solution for security in Haiti, we should avoid reduction scenarios that could jeopardize the results achieved to date.

Beyond security considerations, Haiti still faces a multitude of challenges. The socioeconomic situation remains precarious against a backdrop of chronic political instability and persistent humanitarian challenges, compounded by the recent disaster. There has been an increase in reported cases of cholera over

the past year, and we applaud the Secretary-General's intent to deploy renewed efforts to fight that problem.

In addition, many victims of the 2010 earthquake are still waiting for a resettlement solution. The repatriation of large numbers of Haitians and people of Haitian descent from the Dominican Republic also continues to place demands on the State's resources. At the same time, Canada continues to be concerned about the slow progress in strengthening the rule of law, persistent weaknesses in the judicial and correctional systems, and the status of women.

More than ever, those challenges require not only coordinated and sustained action on the part of international partners, but also increased effectiveness on the part of the Haitian authorities, more particularly in terms of identifying needs, setting priorities and coordinating responses. Canada will continue, for its part, to work closely with national actors and the international community to focus on an integrated response combining socioeconomic considerations, a security dimension and development issues, while continuing to pay special attention to the most vulnerable, including women and children.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, at the outset, to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. I also welcome the presence and briefing, via video teleconference, by Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti. I also thank her and her team for their work and commitment. We also thank the Permanent Representative of Haiti for his participation and statement at this meeting of the Security Council.

Argentina aligns itself with the statement delivered by our colleague from Peru on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

Allow me, in my national capacity, to express my country's solidarity with the people and the Government of Haiti. We regret the tragic loss of human life caused by the passing of Hurricane Matthew, in particular in the southern region of the country.

On Friday, 7 October, the mobile hospital unit of the Argentine Air Force, which is part of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and is made up of 12 doctors and nurses, was deployed to Les Cayes, the capital of Sud department, which was severely affected by the hurricane. Furthermore, the White Helmets Commission of Argentina's Ministry for Foreign Affairs is developing an offer of humanitarian assistance, be presented in the coming days, to help the people of Haiti.

We are receiving alarming information from our Embassy in Haiti regarding the loss of human lives, the destruction of infrastructure, the loss of crops and a lack of drinking water. Our humble assistance is added to that of friendly countries in the region, which have never turned their backs on the people of Haiti, as well as that of Haiti's major donors and traditional partners. That assistance is essential in order for the country to face this new challenge imposed upon it by the forces of nature.

Finally, my country would like to appeal to the Government of Haiti to renew its commitment to the deadlines set for the electoral timetable and to establish a new date for the elections as soon as possible.

With regard to the draft resolution on MINUSTAH being considered by Council members, we urge its adoption by consensus in order to show unity in confronting the adverse scenario facing Haiti today. My country has always promoted the prompt re-establishment of a constitutional Government and the strengthening of democratic institutions, which no doubt will contribute to improving the well-being of the people of Haiti.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7790

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7790th meeting

Thursday, 13 October 2016, 11 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Iliichev	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Méndez Graterol

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2016/753)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-32163 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Expression of condolence and a minute of silence following the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of the Kingdom of Thailand

The President (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the members of the Security Council, I wish to express our deepest condolences to the royal family, the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Thailand on the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

I request members of the Security Council to stand and observe a minute of silence in His Majesty's memory.

The members of the Council observed a minute of silence.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2016/753)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala and Peru to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/862, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Angola, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Guatemala, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Ukraine, the United States of America, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/753, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2313 (2016).

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7791

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7791st meeting

Thursday, 13 October 2016, 3.30 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Zagaynov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gimolieca
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Ms. Gueguen-Mohsen
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Third report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/830)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

16-32170 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Third report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/830)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/830, which contains the third report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat.

I now give the floor to Mr. Feltman.

Mr. Feltman: I wish to thank the Security Council for the opportunity to brief it on the third report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIL) (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat (S/2016/830).

As with previous ones, the report was prepared with the input of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and in close collaboration with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and other relevant United Nations actors and international organizations.

The report stresses that ISIL and its affiliates have continued to experience significant military setbacks, which has undermined ISIL's ability to hold territory, generate assets and maintain "governmental" structures. ISIL is attempting to adapt to this new reality and has intensified its efforts at extortion so as to compensate for the loss of revenue from oil. In Iraq and Syria, ISIL's previous success in holding territory and operating as a quasi-State has been significantly challenged owing to the efforts of several Member States.

However, the report notes that the threat posed by ISIL continues to be significant and to diversify. ISIL and associated entities continue to compete strategically but also to cooperate tactically, occasionally providing one another with operational support. The military pressure currently being exerted on ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic has resulted in an increase in the number of foreign terrorist fighter returnees, in particular to Europe and the Maghreb, presenting a growing challenge to global security. ISIL has also increased the number of attacks outside conflict zones and employs deadlier tactics.

Increasingly complex and nearly simultaneous attacks in different countries, committed through large-scale operations and individual or small terrorist cells either directed or inspired by ISIL, have a significant impact and present particular problems to Member States in terms of a security response. ISIL continues to assert itself in cyberspace, using closed forums, encrypted messaging systems, and communications through the so-called dark net to recruit and distribute its propaganda.

To highlight the impact of ISIL in various regions of the globe, the report focuses on South-East Asia, Yemen and East Africa. In South-East Asia, ISIL's propaganda has re-energized pre-existing terrorist networks and inspired individuals to travel to conflict zones as foreign terrorist fighters. The region hosts foreign terrorist fighters actively directing attacks and is affected by ISIL propaganda and fund-raising efforts, as well as the risks presented by foreign terrorist fighter returnees. In Yemen, even though ISIL has intensified its recruitment efforts and attacks, especially in the Aden area, ISIL has not yet managed to gain significant local support and is generally rejected by the population. The ISIL leadership nonetheless maintains a close interest in the country. Two new ISIL cells have emerged in Somalia. One of those groups, operating in the Puntland region, is being supported by ISIL in Yemen. The second is

operating in southern Somalia. Both groups face strong resistance from Al-Shabaab.

With regard to Member States' efforts to address the threat of ISIL, the report highlights some of the actions taken in South-East Asia. For example, it stresses that countries of the region have introduced and continue to update national counter-terrorism strategies and legislation; established national counter-terrorism coordinating bodies; strengthened international cooperation, although more work needs to be done in that area; developed institutional and legislative counter-terrorism financing tools; recognized the importance of putting in place effective border controls; and given increased attention to developing comprehensive approaches to countering and preventing recruitment and violent extremism.

A growing number of Member States have addressed the potential threat posed by returnees through a broad range of criminal justice, administrative and rehabilitation and reintegration measures, as the Council called for in resolution 2178 (2014). They have also taken a preventive approach, including by charging individuals with inchoate and preparatory offences. However, Member States continue to face numerous challenges in that context, such as the difficulty of generating and converting intelligence information into admissible evidence. The overall progress made by Member States in developing and implementing rehabilitation-and-reintegration strategies remains more limited among Member States of some of the most affected regions.

During the reporting period, a number of United Nations entities have taken further steps to support Member States' efforts to counter the threat of ISIL. Examples include the fact that the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force has further developed the capacity-building implementation plan mandated by the Security Council for countering the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. The plan was presented to Member States almost 10 months ago, but has only been 20 per cent funded to date.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is developing a programme for States in South and South-East Asia on strengthening legal and institutional frameworks in order to target the financial flows and economic resources of ISIL, Al-Qaida and their associates. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has submitted a report on best practices relating to how protecting and promoting human rights helps prevent violent extremism. CTED has been assisting the police chiefs of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in establishing a regional joint pperations centre in Kuala Lumpur. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute is enhancing its cooperation with Jordan, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia on the design and implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for violent extremist offenders and foreign terrorist fighters. In the field, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya continues to prepare assessment reports on ISIL that it shares with Member States.

As the military operations against ISIL in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Libya continue to make progress, we anticipate an increase in the number of returnees and attacks outside conflict zones. The increasingly transnational threat that ISIL represents may therefore become a growing challenge to international peace and security. In that context, the Secretary-General's call for comprehensive and purposeful international cooperation to effectively prevent violent extremism and counter-terrorism becomes all the more important.

Despite the international community's efforts, international cooperation on counter-terrorism is still not up to the level of the danger we are facing. Furthermore, if we aim to anticipate new terrorist threats and dynamically address ISIL's evolving nature, we must complement military, security and law enforcement measures with preventive action that addresses the drivers of violent extremism conducive to terrorism, as demonstrated by the focus provided by the Security Council.

Nevertheless, to effectively address the growing transnational threat of terrorism and violent extremism, I would like to underscore the importance of political will. I would also like to encourage the Council to consider the importance of further mobilizing the financial and technical resources needed to meet the growing demands of programmes to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. Such efforts would be an enormous help to the United Nations in supporting Member States in implementing the relevant Security Council and the General Assembly resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing.

The representative of Uruguay has asked for the floor to make a statement.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing on the Secretary-General's third report (S/2016/830) on the evolution of the threat posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, or Da'esh, to international peace and security, and on the range of activities to combat it undertaken by the United Nations in support to Member States.

The report notes that Da'esh has continued to suffer military defeats in Iraq and Syria and to lose territory and the financial capacity to govern. While that would seem to be encouraging, there are many reasons for us to feel seriously concerned, especially in view of the diversification of the threat posed by Da'esh. Its ability to adapt to new circumstances, which allows it to expand its action geographically and change its modus operandi, means that we are constantly facing new challenges and diminishes our ability to react and respond.

The dangerous personal relationships among terrorists; the growing number of foreign terrorist fighters who are returning to Europe and the Maghreb as a result of the military pressure currently being exerted in Iraq and Syria; the use of so-called broken travel, encryption and the dark net; the planning of multiple and simultaneous attacks; the actions perpetrated by individuals or small groups; the use of the Internet and cyberspace; the use of encrypted messaging systems and closed forums; the building of an ever-increasing transnational network of sympathizers and fighters; and the proliferation of online propaganda are all manifestations of Da'esh's rapid evolution and adaptation to new conditions. Particularly repellent is the use of sexual violence against Yazidi women and girls in Iraq and Syria, as well as other minorities trapped in the conflict, which we firmly condemn.

The report focuses on South-East Asia, Yemen and East Africa and considers the revitalization of foreign terrorist networks in South-East Asia, the Da'esh leadership's interest in Yemen and the emergence of Da'esh cells in Somalia. Since we are far from winning the battle against terrorism and its despicable partisans, we must ask ourselves where we are failing and what we can do, both in this forum and nationally, to combat them more effectively and forcefully.

First, and as the Secretary-General's report clearly indicates, the primary responsibility falls to States. We welcome the measures adopted by some countries, as reflected in the Secretary-General's report. We also note the remaining shortfalls, including the difficulty encountered by some countries in adopting measures to implement resolution 2178 (2014) or Security Council resolutions on preventing terrorism and its financing.

We are aware that the goodwill and resolve of States alone are often not sufficient for the national implementation of comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies. For many, it is also and above all necessary that they receive technical and financial assistance. We are also aware that at other times, what is lacking is not resources but rather the political will. We stress the need for a unified voice in affirming that the fight against terrorism does not allow for ambiguity or doublespeak.

Members of the international community also have a shared responsibility to act jointly and in solidarity in order to more effectively and efficiently combat terrorism. It is in the interests of all for the United Nations to be able to play the role of primary coordinator among States and subregional, regional and international organizations. That perception should be shared by all members of the international community. To that end, we should also consider strategies to build confidence among various States and regions, at all times highlighting that the ultimate objective is the common good — the good of all.

I cannot conclude without noting that as we develop counter-terrorism strategies, we must always bear in mind the obligations of States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law. We should also not lose sight of the fact that by promoting the rule of law and fundamental liberties, and by encouraging inclusive, diverse, multicultural societies, we will enable new and future generations to practice and choose tolerance, which is probably the most important tool for neutralizing any manner of extremism.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.